THE ADVENTURES OF Mr. LOVEILL,

Interſpers'd with many

REAL AMOURS OF THE Modern Polite World.

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THE

THE ADVENTURES OF Mr. LOVEILL.

CHAP. I.

Loveill intends an addreſs to the ſiſter of Mrs. Habille *—is diſconcerted by the character he hears of Miſs Plume —he attacks that Lady by means of her milliner.*

THE world had ſeen plainly enough, that Cynthia's lucky match was of her friend Loveill's making; and as he had always declared, that his ſole buſineſs was the ſeeking a wife, they no ſooner ſaw that lady rich, and at liberty, than they gave them to one another. The authors of the publick papers declar'd, that they heard a

treaty of marriage was on foot, and would be ſpeedily conſummated, between —— Loveill, Eſq; of ———, and Mrs. Nothing, relick of the late Timothy Nothing, merchant: the lady received the compliments of her friends wherever ſhe went, on her double good fortune; and the gentleman paid for four epithalamiums addreſs'd to him by the ſame people, who, with other names, and a few intercalary lines, had ſuited, and intended hereafter alſo to ſuit them, to a hundred other occaſions.

What the world in general is extremely well agreed about, is often not ſo perfectly adjudſted between the parties concerned. Loveill continued indeed to viſit this lady in her ſtate of diſconſolation; but as he had eſtabliſh'd a diſtinction which no body under the ſame circumſtances perhaps ever did before, that is, between wife-hunting and fortune-hunting, the ſingle article money was not able to recommend to him a perſon he had ſome private objections to; and the lady, for her part, had ſeen ſo much of marriage-tyranny, that ſhe never intended to make a ſlave of herſelf again. Here was a ſcene opening, with the promiſe of a very pleaſurable acquaintance; but Loveill, who was ſomething the man of thought with all this freedom of the gallant about him, began to recollect that he

he had deviated extremely from his intended ſcheme of action; that he had let a conſiderable part of the year he allowed himſelf to chuſe in elapſe, and was not yet a jot nearer the end of his buſineſs than he was when he ſet out; and that tho' he had indeed allowed himſelf to take ſome liberties with his money, which nothing but the neceſſity and importance of the caſe could reconcile to his prudence, yet he had much exceeded the largeſt intended extent of theſe.

He determined to renounce the idle and pernicious ſcenes of gallantry he had ſuffer'd himſelf to be deluded into, which were impairing his little fortune apace, and at the ſame time fruſtrating, inſtead of promoting, his general intent. The firſt ſacrifice he made to this reſolution was Cynthia. He waited on her with a very grave face, told her his determination, and took his leave of her with a reſolution, which, however much ſhe laughed at, he ſtrictly kept, of never ſpeaking to her again. He was no ſooner got rid of his former engagements, and, as he flatter'd himſelf, of the paſſions that had led him into them, than he began to think more in earneſt than ever about ſeeking after a woman of merit, and a proper fortune, for a wife. He gave up Ranelagh, and

all the places he had been us'd to play the fool in, and enter'd into the ſober ſcheme of parties at private houſes, and family-viſits. Every female that knew him ſung the praiſes of the reclaimed Rake; and he might, at that inſtant, have marry'd almoſt any woman he pleas'd.

He had been divided between three or four very proper people for ſome days, when falling into a mixed company one afternoon, at the houſe of the lady to whom he was moſt inclined to pay his addreſſes, he heard, juſt as a young lady of the company was gone out of the room, the word Plume pronounc'd by a young fellow who ſat at his elbow, with a very peculiar emotion: the name was ſcarce loſt to his ear, when a lady of the company ſeconded the applauſe, by ſaying, ſhe is indeed a moſt charming creature; and a gay fellow with a title crown'd the encomium, by alledging, that he thought it a peculiar happineſs to be born in an age when there was ſuch an object to look upon.

Loveill, who never could content himhimſelf, on any occaſion, with any thing but the very beſt of the kind, was thunderſtruck with theſe elogiums, pronounced by different people, and ſeeming the ſenſe of the whole world, in regard to a woman he had not yet ſeen. She had been one of

a mixt company indeed in the ſame room with him for more than an hour at this time; but as he was a man the moſt firmly of all the world attach'd to the excellent apothegm *hoc age*, he had minded nothing but the thing he was about; and had been ſo attentive in the examination of thoſe charms which were ready to decide his fate for life, that he had no eyes for thoſe of any other. His determination had paſs'd in ſecret in favour of the lady of the houſe, and he was within a few minutes of acquainting her with it, when this ſudden alarm happen'd; but the natural inſtability of his temper was now too ſtrongly acted upon, to ſuffer him to confirm his new fetters till he had at leaſt ſeen this celebrated Miſs Plume.

The lady whom he had intended his addreſſes to was one of thoſe women of the preſent age whom faſhion, and a dread of contradicting the common opinion, have taught a hundred people to call handſome, for one that really thinks her ſo: it was no other than the ſiſter of the elegant *Mrs. Habille*, endowed with all that ſtaring majeſty which the other ſiſter's face had taught to charm, but ſupported, at a very favourable computation, with only half her beauty; and who had laid a bold claim to

an approbation, that it could only command by facing people into it.

This lady had been long the toaſt of many a pretty fellow, who would have made a proper huſband for her; but one half of whom, the high price her looks beſpoke her ſetting herſelf at, had frighted from the attempt, as her inordinate love of publick places had the other. Loveill was the only man not to be deterr'd by either of theſe conſiderations. He had concluded, that a woman was well loſt, who ſet herſelf at a higher rate than ſhe really deſerved; and that it was as much every huſband's own fault that did not reclaim a female rake, as it is every wife's who does not reclaim a male one. He had conſidered her perfections and her imperfections very ſeriouſly: he found her perſon at leaſt ſufficiently agreeable, and her fortune about what he expected; and as he had determined upon marrying, ſhe appear'd to him in the light of a woman he might as well addreſs, as not; one who would make as good a wife as another, or another as good as her; in fine, as a perſon that a man might be very eaſy with, or very eaſy without.

While neither ſcale turn'd the beam, and while the lover firmly intended to open his honourable trenches before ſome body,

he

he might as well determine in the affirmative in this caſe, as not: but the ſtate of affairs was ſtrangely alter'd with him ſince the character he had heard of Miſs Plume; and he was determin'd to ſee how many good qualities, and how many bad ones, were linked to the beauty he heard ſhe poſſeſs'd, before he could determine whether he had a heart to ſpare for any body elſe. He had the caution not to ſhew any thing of the emotion this lady's praiſe had rais'd in him, before the company, who he found, moſt of them at leaſt, knew her very well; but taking his eternal leave of his intended miſtreſs with no ceremony, he ſlip'd into a chair, and order'd the fellows to ſtop at Monſieur Frize's, who had the honour to dreſs his hair. His buſineſs with this gentleman was, to be informed of who was the moſt eminent milliner that he heard of among the ladies on whom he perform'd his important operations. He never queſtion'd but that Mr. Frize would recommend to him ſomebody of his own nation; neither did he queſtion that his own countrywomen would join with the Frenchman, in prefering a foreigner; nor finally, was there the leaſt room to doubt, but that the fineſt lady was dreſs'd by the fineſt milliner in town.

His enquiry ſucceeded as he expected. The Frenchman recommended to him the very eminent Mademoiſelle Ruban of Pall-mall; and the gallant gentleman had no ſooner arriv'd there, and ordered two or three pair of Bruſſels ruffles, which he gave them their own price for, than he received, in anſwer to his queſtion whether they ſerved Miſs Plume, a long detail of the perfections of that lady, and an account that ſhe had been there that morning to order a new head; and would probably call every morning afterwards till it was done. Loveill ſaid ſome handſome things of the lady; and the gentlewoman of the ſhop, full of the complaiſance of her country, and of the praiſes of her cuſtomers, not only agreed with him in all he had ſaid of her, but added, that tho' ſhe had heard many civil things ſaid of that lady, ſhe never heard any from a perſon from whom they ought to be better receiv'd: that ſhe begg'd a thouſand pardons for preſuming to enter into the intentions of her cuſtomers, but that ſhe could not but ſay that ſhe thought that lady and he were the moſt cut out for one another, that ever two people in the world were. Many civil things of this ſort had paſſed, when the gallant Mr. Loveill took his leave; and to enſure the good word of the young ladies

ladies of the ſhop, as well as that of the miſtreſs of it, begg'd her permiſſion to leave a couple of guineas, for a diſh of tea among her women.

Every woman's ears are open to flattery; and it is always beſt of all received from thoſe who appear to have leaſt intereſt in beſtowing it. Loveill had a violent inclination to viſit the lady of the ſhop the next morning, at the hour when he had reaſon to ſuppoſe this beauty of the world would be there; but he knew the hearty ſervices he might expect from the advocates he had retained in his cauſe, and doubted not but they would repeat every thing they had heard him ſay of her, with more freedom than he ſhould dare to do it himſelf, even tho' he ſhould be there. He promiſed himſelf great things from the effect of all theſe compliments, and queſtion'd not their giving him a very favourable reception, when he ſhould addreſs the lady in perſon.

This was no deſpicable ſcheme upon a fine lady; but as good a head as Loveill had for plotting on theſe occaſions, the perſon he had now retain'd in his ſervice had a better. The women always know beſt what will pleaſe women; and this artful advocate, tho' ſhe very well knew, that her new cuſtomer expected no leſs of her

than the repeating all the fine things he had ſaid, to the lady he had ſpoken them of, yet determin'd, before ſhe came, not to ſay one Syllable about them.

She very artfully conſidered, that compliments to Miſs Plume were as inſipid as familiarity could make the moſt indifferent thing; and that love was what ſhe expected of all the world, and therefore thought herſelf under no ſort of obligation to any body for making it to her. She concluded, that not the man who lov'd Miſs Plume was likely to carry her, but the man whom Miſs Plume lov'd; and on that determination ſhe founded her attempt of bringing them together, not on the paſſion he could feel, but on that he ſhould inſpire.

The reſolution was not ſooner taken, than the young ladies of the ſhop were acquainted with it; and every one engag'd with an uncommon ardour in the ſervice of a gentleman, who had found the way to make himſelf uncommonly agreeable to them.

As it had been Loveill's buſineſs to be as extravagant in the ſhop as he could, in order to purchaſe as large a ſhare as poſſible of the eſteem of the miſtreſs of it, which he very judiciouſly determin'd would bear a regular proportion to her proſpect

of

of advantage from it, he had purchaſed the beſt lace the houſe afforded: this was extremely elegant; and the good gentlewoman who had ſold it, knew it could not fail of exciting the attention of any female of taſte, who had a ſight of it. She knew the hour of Miſs Plume's coming, and took care to have one of the ruffles made of it lying careleſsly in her way.

The bait readily took: the lady came at the accuſtom'd hour. The firſt thing ſhe caſt her eyes on was the ruffle, and ſhe ſtarted at the ſight. When the firſt ſurpriſe was over, ſhe took it in her hand, and grew immoderate in her praiſes of the fineneſs of the lace, the elegance of the pattern, and a thouſand other beauties in it. The young gentlewoman who was neareſt it, took the hint that her miſtreſs gave her by an expreſſive nod; and colouring up at the very remembrance of the owner, told the lady, that if they had been a great deal prettier, they would not have been half pretty enough for the gentleman who was to wear them. This ſhort ſentence, terminated with a ſigh, gave the cue to another of the apprentices, who ſat at the farther end of the counter, to turn her head over her ſhoulder, and ſay to the perſon who ſat next her, what a hand! what ſhoulders! what a look he had! did

ever

ever any man in the world ſpeak with ſuch an air?—The perſon to whom all this was addreſs'd, anſwer'd with a whiſper loud enough to be heard—I wiſh I had not ſeen him.—

Mademoiſelle now ſaw it was coming to her turn. The lady, who little ſuſpected that all this was a concerted ſcene laid againſt her, turn'd round from the girls to the miſtreſs, and aſk'd her with a ſmile, who it was that they were all fallen in love with? Mademoiſelle did not think it her buſineſs to underſtand that queſtion; but Miſs Plume ſoon put it into other words, by aſking her who that ruffle belong'd to? Mademoiſelle ſmil'd, and anſwer'd, why indeed, Madam, he is the fineſt fellow I ever ſaw; ſuch an air, ſuch an addreſs, ſuch a grace in every thing he does, and ſuch a perſon, I never ſaw together. I believe, in my conſcience, reply'd the lady, you are in love with him too; but pray, who is it? Nay, ſaid the cunning contriver of the ſcene, That I know nothing of. He is a ſtranger; he came in by accident, and order'd theſe, and ſome other things; and I believe is going to Paris.

This laſt hint had the intended effect. The lady to whom it was ſpoke had long ſuppos'd every thing in her power, and a little nettled to be told of a perſon

ſo worthy her regard, who was juſt going out of her way; ſhe ſmartly anſwer'd, "Ma-"demoiſelle, do you ſhew me that he is ſo "fine a fellow as you all talk of, and I war-"rant you I'll ſpoil his journey!" The artful M. Ruban ſhewed no triumph in her face at this proof of the ſucceſs of her ſcheme; but, as ſhe knew difficulties always made women the more eager in their purſuits, ſhe cooly anſwered, that ſhe believed ſhe would hardly have an opportunity of doing that; for that, if ſhe underſtood him right, he talk'd of going in two days.

The lady againſt whom all this ſcene was laid, had been ſo little us'd to diſappointments, that ſhe could not be patient at the thought of one. Dear Mademoiſelle, ſaid ſhe with great emotion, if you love me, get me a ſight of him. Can't you contrive to get him here about ſomething, and I'll come in by chance.

The whole ſcheme of this ſubtle advocate was now accompliſh'd. The lady had now made that her own act, which the other was afraid of taking upon herſelf without her conſent; and the lover was ſure of an opportunity of introducing himſelf upon a very favourable footing. Mademoiſelle told the lady, that ſhe would contrive to get him there at that hour the next day, under pretence of ſhewing him

ſome

ſome new patterns: and the lady took her leave with a promiſe of being punctual, and with a thouſand cautions, that the gentleman ſhould not know ſhe was expected, or knew any thing of his being appointed.

CHAP. II.

A miſtake between two ladies on the ſubject of Loveill's addreſſes—It terminates in an amicable rivalſhip.—A Vaux-hall ſcene.

THE lover's impetuoſity could be ſuppreſs'd no longer than till the time by which he thought the lady would have finiſh'd her viſit; he calculated ſo cloſely, that her chair was not out of ſight when he arriv'd at the door. The ladies of the ſhop receiv'd him with joyful countenances; and Mademoiſelle told him her whole ſcheme, and the ſucceſs of it. He acknowledg'd the ſuperior addreſs of this miſtreſs of contrivance; and told her he would never doubt hereafter, but that a woman would be always better able to deceive a woman, than any body of the other ſex, however practis'd in ſuch attempts.

Violent

Violent praiſe of a man before he is ſeen, never leaves the perſon indifferent who hears it; but the turn it takes is different, according to the humour and temper of the hearer: with the ſevere and critical it always terminates in the prejudice of the perſon applauded, in whom there never is found merit enough to anſwer the expectations rais'd before-hand; but with the indolent and good-natur'd, who have the complaiſance to let others judge for them, and to take the opinion of the world on credit, nothing turns ſo much to the advantage of the ſubject; in which (that they may not expoſe their want of an apprehenſion equal to other peoples) they always pretend to ſee every thing they have been told of.

Mademoiſelle had very rightly judg'd this celebrated beauty to be one of the latter kind. Her thoughts were too much taken up with the admiration of herſelf, to give her opportunity to look into any thing elſe; and in conſequence ſhe had no opinion of her own, on any other ſubject.

The hour of their appointed meeting the next day approach'd, and the lover, who thought it was his buſineſs to be found there, not to come in as if to ſtare at his miſtreſs, was at the ſhop before the time: punctual as the clock appear'd the lady; but as ſhe knew her buſineſs was

to

to meet a man, ſhe had taken the precaution not to come alone as uſual, but had brought with her, her very intimate friend and companion, the ſcarce leſs celebrated Miſs Carmine.

The acquaintance of Miſs Plume had been fatal to this lady. Miſs Carmine had youth, beauty, good ſenſe, and a moderate fortune. She was the adoration of every beau of the Park, the court, and the card-table, before this other fatal beauty appear'd. Nature had given Miſs Plume a complexion, ſuch as ſhe never beſtows above once in two or three thouſand years upon a mortal. *Helen*, if we may believe the poets, was the laſt perſon before her who had poſſeſs'd ſuch a one, and the firſt before her *Eve*; this lady boaſts being the third; and, according to the received opinion, the æra for a fourth will not happen before the diſſolution of the world.

Ambition is infinitely more violent when raiſed on praiſe, than when innate: whatever Miſs Carmine had of the latter kind, which anecdotes declare was ſome, was ſwallowed up in the former; ſhe had heard, ever ſince ſhe could hear, that the world did not boaſt a ſkin like hers; ſhe enjoy'd the triumph till the appearance of this fatal beauty; ſhe own'd her ſuperiority the moment ſhe ſaw her; ſhe ſought her acquaintance,

tance, to know by what means ſuch perfection was to be acquir'd; and when ſhe found abſolute nature in the whole, ſhe determined to try whether art could not heighten hers up to it; and from that moment bury'd under ceruſs and Spaniſh red, the ſecond beſt ſkin the world.

Here is the true hiſtory of that ſeeming madneſs, which the whole world before could never gueſs at. It was with this lady that Miſs Plume enter'd the ſcene of action, on the appointed morning. She no ſooner ſaw Loveill, than all the blood in her body was in her face; ſhe ſhamm'd a whiſper to Mrs. Ruban, to hide her confuſion; and on her aſking if the girls were not in the right, reply'd under the ſeal of ſecrecy, that they had not ſaid half ſo much of him as he deſerv'd.

Loveill read all this in her eyes, and glory'd not a little in his ſucceſs: he knew his buſineſs ſo well however, that he conceal'd all this; and with an air of the moſt conſummate indifference, aſk'd Miſs Carmine her judgment of the laces before him. A very little thing leads into a converſation, when people have a mind to it: this lady knew nothing of her friend's motive for coming to the place where they were, and flatter'd herſelf with an opinion of having made a conqueſt of ſome conſequence.

Loveill

Loveill was glad to find himſelf ſo well receiv'd; he preſs'd the converſation in the politeſt terms in the world, till Miſs Plume engag'd in it. He knew too well how much depended on his being received or rejected by this lady in his firſt attempt, and therefore had recourſe to the old expedient of making a familiarity with her friend. The deference, the pretended confuſion, and reſpect, with which he uttered every ſyllable that he preſum'd to deliver to Miſs Plume, and the many ſpeaking glances he took care to ſteal at her at times, when he knew ſhe would find him out in it, ſoon inſtructed her in the buſineſs of his addreſs; but ſo blind is prejudice in our own favour, that Miſs Carmine ſaw nothing of all this, but concluded that ſhe alone was the object of his attention.

The diſcourſe turn'd upon common ſubjects; but Loveill, determined to let no opportunity ſlip of encreaſing his intereſt with the lady, obſerving, that it was likely to be a bad night, took care, quite by accident, to mention Vaux-hall; he could eaſily gueſs that the lady would not be diſpleaſed at knowing where ſhe might ſee him again, if ſhe liked it, and took care to tell her that he ſhould be there. The lady told him ſhe believed it would rain; but he was very poſitive on the other ſide,

and

and modeſtly told her, that according to his principles, nothing ought to prevent people from doing what they had a mind to. This was enough to give her an aſſurance that he would be there; and as the buſineſs of the meeting was now done on his part, he took the precaution to prevent all ſuſpicion, by turning the reſt of the converſation upon indifferent topicks, till they parted.

The ladies adjourn'd to the Park. They were no ſooner at a diſtance from company, than Miſs Carmine ſav'd her friend the confuſion of declaring firſt, by aſking her, what was her opinion of Mr. Loveill? and adding, inſtead of waiting for an anſwer, that ſhe thought him by far the prettieſt fellow ſhe had ſeen. Miſs Plume, who would have been full as well pleas'd to have ſeen her friend a little cooler in her encomiums, anſwer'd in general terms, and came to no farther explanation of her own thoughts, than ſaying, that ſhe thought him very well. Miſs Carmine knew ſo much of her friend's temper, that ſhe ſaw this indifference was too great not to be an affected one; ſhe grew ſuſpicious from this moment of her ſecret liking to Loveill; and Miſs Plume, impatient of her open and declared eſteem for him.

Any other friendſhip between women would have been broke off by ſuch an accident as this; but Miſs Carmine, who had too good an underſtanding to let a quarrel grow up merely from a want of an explanation, when they had got home addreſs'd herſelf to her friend in this manner. "It is with infinite uneaſineſs, my dear "Miſs Plume, that I ſee a mutual diſſa-"tisfaction and diſtruſt growing between "us. There is no concealing that we are "upon our guard, as to one another— "moſt friendſhips ceaſe under theſe cir-"cumſtances; but ours, to me at leaſt, "is too valuable to be given up, without "our coming to an explanation. We have "by accident met with a ſtranger; I con-"feſs to you he is not indifferent to me, "and I think I have ſome reaſon to be-"lieve, from his behaviour, that I am "not ſo to him. You ſeem uneaſy at "this; but you are leſs candid and open "in your expreſſions: let me entreat you "to renew our mutual confidence in one "another, by telling me as freely your "thoughts in regard to him, as you have "heard mine."

Miſs Plume touched with this friendly and honeſt remonſtrance, anſwered her: "My deareſt friend, you have given me "too many proofs how truly valuable

"your

" your friendſhip is to me, not to make " me ſolicitous to preſerve it. It is true, " that we are upon a point, in which, if " our acquaintance does not break off, " 'tis the firſt that ever ſubſiſted under " it. But you have ſhewn the way to " ſave it. You demand the truth of " me, and I muſt anſwer you that I " have a prior right in what appears to " you upon an equality between us. I " met this gentleman by appointment; I " believe he intends to addreſs me, and " (pardon me if I am miſtaken) but I " think he only begins with you, in his " way to me. It is pretty clear, that he " ſtands fair for having which of us he " pleaſes; but let us leave it to him to " determine which it ſhall be."

Here was perhaps the only amicable rivalſhip that ever truly appear'd in the world. It was determin'd, that which ever of them prov'd to be the lover's choice, the other ſhould, from that inſtant, renounce all thoughts of him; but the difficulty yet remain'd to clear up that point, and put an end to the uncertainty. It was ſoon propos'd, and as ſoon agreed to, to give him the meeting at Vaux-hall. The ladies dined together, and in the evening ſent cards to two of their acquaintance, and ſet out for the place appointed.

Loveill,

Loveill, who had perſuaded himſelf they would be there, took care to go early, that he might be ready to meet them: he dangled about the door till he ſaw them enter, accompanied by a third female, whoſe look did not promiſe overmuch diſcernment; and a led captain, famous for the furious cock of his hat, and the peacefulneſs of his diſpoſition; and not leſs ſo for the effect of a ſevere piece of diſcipline he received ſeven years ago, for his loquacity and pertneſs, the conſequence of which has been, that he has not deliver'd, upon an average, above three ſentences a day ſince.

Loveill, who very well knew the character of the beau, and ſaw deep enough into that of the other attendant, found that their coming was not all he had to thank them for: the only terrors he had were thoſe of ſome more formidable rival, or ſome more impertinent female joining them: to prevent this, he went up to them immediately, and by one artifice or other kept them to himſelf the whole evening.

The people who are in the management of this place, prudently conſidering that they do not get quite ſo much by the company's walking as they do by their eating and drinking, have found means to connect the ſale of their wine and their muſick

together, by not dividing the performance into acts, but beginning each ſeparate piece about ten minutes after the other. Loveill told the ladies, he knew they had both a high taſte for muſick; and convincing them of the impoſſibility of walking, on this plan, he engaged them early to ſit down. The evening proved as he had expected, and he had the pleaſure of their company till one, before it was poſſible to get away.

The converſation of ſo many hours gave him frequent opportunities of pleading his paſſion; and the eagerneſs of both of them to decide their pretenſions, gave him a better reception for every thing he thought proper to ſay to them, than either of them ever gave any man before, or probably ever will again.

It was impoſſible for Loveill to gueſs the cauſe of this fortunate turn; but he did not fail to profit of it to the utmoſt. His firſt addreſſes were paid to the friend of his miſtreſs; and for the firſt half hour her very rival could hardly avoid giving every thing up to her. Out of patience however at the continuance of a ſcene which gave her ſo much pain, and which ſhe yet ſaw was merely pretence and affectation, ſhe began to deſcend a little from the majeſty of her deportment, which generally

generally commands all that diſtant reſpect that is paid her; and even ſought occaſions of Loveill's ſaying civil things to her. From this moment the ſcene chang'd. Loveill, who never fail'd of making the moſt of an advantage, preſs'd his ſucceſs on every opportunity; and before they were ſat down to ſupper, was upon much freer terms with her than any lover had yet been.

The remainder of the evening was ſpent in open and profeſs'd courtſhip. Miſs Carmine was left to entertain herſelf with her other friend and the captain as well as ſhe could: it was to thoſe three, much as if no ſuch people as Loveill and Miſs Plume were in company; and to them, much as if the reſt were ſomewhere elſe.

Loveill, after he had gallanted the ladies home, retired to his own lodgings, not a little ſatisfied with the ſucceſs of his amour, and very little ſuſpecting that any ill-luck threaten'd him.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Miſs Plume's friend lays a deep ſcheme againſt her.—Specimen of a lady's veracity.—The hiſtory of the caterpillar cantata at Ranelagh.

IT was late the next day before the ladies roſe; and notwithſtanding they longed very heartily to ſee one another, Miſs Carmine, who had much upon her hands beſide the uſual buſineſs of the morning, was not at her friend's lodgings till dinner-time. Miſs Plume was ſufficiently ſatisfy'd with her conqueſt in the matter of diſpute between them, and could not ſuppreſs the ill-natured pleaſure ſhe took in mortifying a rival, though that rival was her deareſt friend.

She began, by aſking Miſs Carmine, if ſhe had ſeen her gallant that morning? The other told her, no. She then demanded of her, if ſhe was yet ſatisfy'd how much ſhe had deceived herſelf about that gentleman? and how true every thing was that ſhe had told her? and added, that it would have been the greateſt misfortune that had ever happened to her, if ſhe had loſt the acquaintance of ſo valuable a friend as

Miſs Carmine, on a miſtake, which could only have turned out to her own diſappointment; and which was entirely founded on the diffidence of a very ſincere lover.

The ladies dined together: the converſation, while the ſervants were preſent, turned upon indifferent things; but as ſoon as thoſe domeſtick ſpies were diſmiſſed, Miſs Plume reſumed the ſubject of her victory. When this lady had ſaid every thing that pride and an ill-natured triumph could dictate to her on the occaſion, her friend took up the diſcourſe, and addreſſed her in this manner:

"My dear Miſs Plume, I am very "ſenſible of the foibles and weakneſſes of "my ſex; among which I know a too "ſevere raillery, on occaſions of the vic-"tory over a rival, is one of the greateſt; "and of all others, is the moſt unavoid-"able. I have given yours its full ſcope "upon this occaſion without reſentment, "that I may have ſomething to plead in "my own favour, if I ſhould, through "too much proſperity, grow faulty my-"ſelf on the ſame occaſion; and that you "may remember, if this ſhould ever be "the caſe, I have a right to your pardon, "from what I have already pardoned in "you."

The

The lady came to a ſtop here, and put her hand into her pocket, as if to ſearch for ſomething. Her friend was in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment at what appeared to her at this time the moſt unintelligible gibberiſh ſhe had ever heard delivered in ſo ſerious and ſo ſenſible a manner. She had not however had much time to expreſs her wonder in, when her friend taking her hand out of her pocket, with a paper in it, reſumed the diſcourſe, and explained the whole riddle. "I told you, continued "ſhe, that I had not ſeen Mr. Loveill "to-day; but I did not tell you, Madam, "that I had not heard from him; tho' I "dare be bold to tell you that you have "not had that pleaſure, unleſs he has "yet more deceit in him than I can ſu-"ſpect him of. But let me put an end to "this conteſt for ever. You know I own "your ſuperiority infinitely, both in beauty "and in merit; but the men will not al-"ways think as we do. I need not de-"clare myſelf any farther, let your own "eyes inform you of the reſt."

With theſe words ſhe delivered to her friend the paper ſhe had ſeemed to allude to; which that lady opened with trembling hands, and read as follows:

MADAM,

I Dare not ſee you this morning, becauſe I accuſe myſelf of having been guilty of a fault againſt you. The vanity of your friend conſtrued common civility into courtſhip laſt night, and I deteſt myſelf for having given into the deceit. I need not tell you, that every thing I ſaid to her was directed to your ear: could your diſdain have ſuffered you to hear, you would have known what I ſaid could be applicable to no other woman in the world.—I am ſenſible of my misfortune, tho' I ſee not the way to extricate myſelf. Will it be ſufficient that I avoid her ſight for ever? and can I do that, without ſacrificing much of your company with hers? If you have compaſſion, inſtruct me: if you have juſtice, forgive me. You know too well I cannot live many hours longer without ſeeing you; and may I entreat, that it may be at home, far, far from your miſtaken fooliſh friend.

Miſs Carmine, to carry her triumph to its utmoſt height, had deſired her friend to read this letter aloud. At the concluſion of it, ſhe ſtopp'd all queſtions, by declaring the contempt ſhe treated it with; and telling her, you ſee, Madam, how much reſpect I pay to the poor gentleman's requeſt.

queſt.—I came to you the moment I had received it.—I ſuppoſe we ſhall have him here; but I could not bear to give myſelf, even in private, a pleaſure, that I knew muſt coſt my friend ſo dear: now it is your own fault if he is not refuſed admittance to me.

The colours in a boy's ſportive bubble do not change faſter, as it dances along the liquid air, than did the roſes and the lilly whiteneſs of Miſs Plume's face as ſhe read this letter, and attended to her friend's diſcourſe that ſucceeded it. She burſt into tears, and throwing her arms about her neck, told her, "My deareſt friend, I am the unhappieſt among women—this ſubtle man has repaid all the miſchiefs I have done the ſex—had any body but yourſelf informed me of his treachery, I would not have believed it—but I have known you long enough, to be aſſured nothing but truth can come from you. It is not now my buſineſs to determine about this deceiver: I have no ſhare in him, do you give what orders you pleaſe, as to his admittance."

Miſs Carmine, with a great deal of ſeeming tenderneſs, took care to throw in the ſevereſt and moſt cutting things that envy and vengeance could furniſh her with on this occaſion. She told her friend, that ſhe acknowledged ſhe loved him: but,

added ſhe, never let me indulge a pleaſure at the expence of my deareſt friend's repoſe! Her hand was upon the bell as ſhe ſpoke, and the ſervant no ſooner entered, than ſhe ordered him to remember, that his lady was at home to no body; and that ſhe had been out all the morning.

The meſſage was ſcarce delivered, when Loveill, for whom this artful rival had laid a ſnare that ſhe knew muſt detain him the whole morning, arrived at the door. He was puzzled beyond all expreſſion at hearing that Miſs Plume was not at home. The bait her friend had laid for him was a pretended letter from that lady, to tell him ſhe ſhould be all the morning at a certain auction, and that ſhe wiſhed to ſee him there. He had been waiting all the morning at the place, and on hearing that the lady had been out all that time, and ſtill was ſo, he concluded, that ſhe was ſtill where ſhe had appointed him, and accus'd himſelf of having made ſome terrible blunder in not finding her. He took out her letter, read it over and over again, examined every ſentence, and ſpelt every word of it fifty times. Nothing appeared to him but the ſame place, and the ſame circumſtances that had before. He went back thither: he would not truſt his own eyes, but aſked of every body he knew, if Miſs Plume

Plume was there, or had been there? The univerſal anſwer was, no: and he, in fine, went back to his lodgings in the utmoſt concern and uneaſineſs.

All the ſubtlety of Loveill had given him no inſight into the true circumſtances of this affair. The letters, which had been the occaſion of all this uneaſineſs on both ſides, were both of them of Miſs Carmine's writing. That lady had given up all thoughts of the lover for herſelf, after what ſhe had ſeen at Vaux-hall: all that remained to her was, to prevent her rival's triumph, and the point ſhe aimed at was, the doing this by breaking off the acquaintance from that moment, and that without their coming to an explanation.

The credit this lady had always held for veracity gained her plot upon her rival an indiſputable reception: Miſs Plume, who thought ſhe knew her friend would not lye, built all her aſſurance of the truth of Loveill's deceit on that foundation; and was not enough upon her guard to obſerve, that her friend had form'd her converſation on this ſubject in equivocal terms, and had never told her, (though ſhe took the utmoſt care to draw her into the belief of it) that the letter ſhe had produced was written by Loveill. His abſence from the lady, during this explanation, ſhe knew

was abſolutely neceſſary; and ſhe had provided for it by the counterfeit letter ſhe had ſent him, which, as he had never ſeen either of their hands, he never ſuſpected; and which ſhe knew would detain him, at a wrong place, a proper time.

She had taxed her addreſs to the utmoſt, to bring things to the criſis they were now at; and after this, ſhe quietly left it to her rival's pride to prevent an explanation.

The lover, who little imagined what plots were on foot againſt him, eat no dinner: He pined for the time of the evening Park, the only proſpect he had of ſeeing them. He was there an hour before any body elſe: Miſs Carmine, who expected this, would fain have kept her rival away, though at the expence of her own abſence too. She told her of the redneſs of her eyes; but was anſwered, that people would believe the wind had done it; and of a thouſand other things, for every one of which ſhe had as ready a reply: in ſhort, ſhe concluded with telling her friend, I don't know, my dear, why it is you throw ſo many difficulties in my way; but I know very well why I will not be debarred by them. I am determined to ſee how this traitor dares meet my eyes after this infamous behaviour.

When

When Miſs Carmine ſaw it was in vain reſiſting her friend's inclination, ſhe made it a piece of civility to accompany her; adviſing her (as ſhe ſuppoſed Loveill would be there) to treat him with the contempt that he deſerved. Miſs Plume ſet out brimful of very terrible reſolutions; but ſhe no ſooner ſaw the object of them, than they loſt their nature, and what before was vengeance became on the inſtant an inoffenſive ſorrow. They both avoided the walk in which they ſaw the offender; but he, conſcious of nothing criminal towards them, joined them with all the pleaſantry of a man of ſenſe, made as happy as mortal man well could be. He told Miſs Plume of the uneaſineſs he had been under at not ſeeing her that morning: ſhe ſtared at his manner of expreſſing himſelf; but this was only one of the thouſand unintelligible hints that were given on this occaſion: in fine, the whole converſation ſeemed a game at croſs-purpoſes. The ladies had each of them their reaſons for being ſufficiently uneaſy, but they took great care to hide them, both from him, and from one another.

The only indifferent perſon of the company was the lover; and, for his part, he was ſo perfectly unconcerned, that he entertained them with all the ſpirit in the world, out of the converſation which he

told his lady ſhe had been greatly out of luck to miſs at the auction that morning: and during this unconcerned chit-chat to her, an unfortunate caterpillar dropping out of one of the trees into Miſs Carmine's neck, and not running away quite ſo quick as that lady ſuppoſed it would have done, he philoſophiz'd on the ſubject before he picked it off, and gave them the whole hiſtory of the gawdy butterfly that this very aminal would become, in the approaching ſummer, tho' cloath'd during the ſpring in this robe of uglineſs and deformity.

The ladies were not more ſurpriſed at the unconcern with which he converſed with them, than he with the reſtraint which he at laſt ſaw they were under. He bantered them about it, and made them by that means much more angry than before. He would have conducted them to Ranelagh, but they refuſed, and, when they went out of the Park, with great coldneſs put off the civility he offered of ſeeing them home.

The lover was no ſooner left alone, than he began to reflect on what had happened. He could make no gueſs at the reaſon of this alteration in the ladies behaviour, in any thing that regarded himſelf, and therefore immediately concluded, that it muſt be

owing to ſomething they had determined between one another. He remembered, that he had found them in the ſame ſort of humour that they continued in, therefore that it was evidently owing to nothing he had ſaid to them, as he had not ſeen them ſince the Vaux-hall ſcene, in which it was very plain that they were extreme good friends: it was as evident, that the reſerved behaviour that gave him all this uneaſineſs was owing to ſomething prior to the meeting at which it was exerted, and poſterior to the evening before; and it was pretty evident therefore, that it was only owing to ſomething that had paſſed between themſelves.

He now ſcan'd over in his thoughts ſeveral expreſſions that had dropt from Miſs Plume, during their walking together, which, though he had paſſed them over at that time, he now found were evidently the marks of a ſevere reſentment againſt a faithleſs lover. Theſe, added to ſome things that had dropped from the other lady, let him into the whole ſecret, except the matter of the letter; and he plainly enough ſaw, that Miſs Carmine had pretended he paid his addreſſes in reality to her, tho' he could by no means gueſs how ſo improbable a ſtory ſhould have gained credit.

He

He attempted to fiſh out the whole from them in a viſit at home; but was denied admittance: he could only meet them now in publick; and there they would ſcarce ſpeak to him. Three days paſſed in this uncomfortable ſituation, in which time Loveill, who knows how to make every thing ſerve his purpoſe, found means of telling the offended fair one at Ranelagh, how contemptible an opinion he entertain'd of her friend, ſince ſhe would not hear it in private; and intereſted the entertainments of the place, though unknown to themſelves, in his revenge.

The ladies ſtill frequented publick places, where Loveill every day appeared; and as they would admit no more converſation with the pretended faithleſs man, the whole artillery of their wit was employed in pertneſſes expreſſed in few words, and thrown out in a diſdainful manner, as they paſſed by him. Loveill in anſwer to one of theſe attacks, in which the friend of his miſtreſs teſtify'd her contempt of him, though ſhe knew him in her power, took care to introduce the little-expected ſcene to them, by telling her very loud, "that he could have "liked her; but that he never kiſſed her but "his lips were either the whiter or the redder "for it." This engaged the company, who were

were neareſt our quarrelſome people, to ſtare after them in a very uncommon manner; and it was buzzed about the whole room in a few minutes, that a gentleman had publickly told Miſs Carmine ſhe painted.

The whiſper ran about next among that part of the company who did not know her; and twenty people were enquiring, which is the lady that was affronted? and as many pointing to her, in whatever part of the room ſhe ſtood, with *that's ſhe.*

Loveill, who ſaw the taking notice of her now become as univerſal as it well could be, contrived to join the ladies with an idle companion, who is eternally ſitting under the muſick; and when he had placed them there with all the circle of people, who came to liſten to the performers, about them, and ſaw every body engaged in enquiring or anſwering about the affronted lady, he whiſpered Mr. Beard, that he ſhould be glad to hear that cantata of his, which Mr. Feſting had juſt ſet; and the company were entertained with a new ſong when they little expected it; the words of which were theſe:

Recit.

Recit. *Adorn'd with all the graces art beſtows,*
As jaunty Sylvia trip'd along the Mall,
A caterpillar dropping from the boughs,
Her ſnowy breaſt receiv'd it in its fall.
Three paces back the mimick ſtep
diſplay,
And next burſts forth the loud,
affected eh!

Air. *Shield me heaven! avaunt, be gone!*
Why remainſt thou motionleſs?
Drag thy haggard body on,
Monſter of ſloth, and uglineſs!

Recit. *With high diſdain the affronted reptile*
heard,
Th' ungenerous triumph of the haughty
maid;
Scorn fill'd his little heart, and half
uprear'd,
He thus the taunting inſolence repaid.

Air. *Why this anger? why theſe airs?*
Siſter reptile, prithee why?
Shapeleſs uglineſs prepares
Charms alike for you and I.

Theſe my robes of ſpring, and ſhame,
No more my ſummer form diſgrace,
Than do thy morning looks, proud dame,
Thy evenings art-embelliſh'd face.

Bloomleſs

Bloomleſs to meet the riſing ſun,
The worm its reptile figure rears;
The buſineſs of the toilet done,
The painted butterfly appears.

The lady had no ſooner heard the three firſt lines of this cantata, than ſhe perceiv'd that Sylvia and Miſs Carmine were the ſame perſon: her terror grew greater at every word that followed, and ſhe knew what ſort of parallel ſhe was to expect before ſhe heard it. Every ſyllable of Loveill's converſation on the occaſion of the caterpillar, now roſe up in her remembrance; and ſhe perceived, that what ſhe was now attending to was no more than his thoughts put into verſe, and apply'd to revenge his quarrel to her. She would have got up in the middle of the performance, but her companion, who ſaw the whole ſcheme as well as herſelf, advis'd her againſt that, as it would be the only means by which ſhe could add to his triumph. She ſat it out amidſt the gaze of five hundred ſpectators, every one of whom was thoroughly convinced that ſhe was the ſubject of it; and Mr. Loveill, who did not think it a proper time to appear before the ladies immediately after this, prudently withdrew from the place before the mob that was about the lady broke up, and gave

gave her liberty of avoiding their farther obſervation.

The countenances of the two ladies, which he had ſteadfaſtly obſerved during this remarkable ſcene, let him into the whole ſecret of their thoughts, and confirmed the ſuſpicions he had before conceived of the plots of Miſs Carmine againſt him. He determined that he had by this laſt ſtep thoroughly convinced Miſs Plume of his innocence as to any amour with the other lady; and that he had nothing now to do but to wait on her to ſettle every thing upon the former amicable footing. He attempted it; but was denied admittance, as before: he had ſtill, however, the advantage of meeting her in public, and that without the company of this arch-enemy; for people had now got the ſtory of her diſgrace by heart, and ſhe never ventured her head out of doors but the words *caterpillar* or *butterfly*, according as ſhe was dreſſed or undreſſed, reſounded in her ears.

Loveill took the firſt opportunity of ſeeing Miſs Plume alone, to tell her, that he ſaw the plot that had been laid to ruin him in her eſteem, but that he hoped he had convinced her how little juſtice there was in his accuſation. The lover expected no leſs from this, than a thorough reconciliation; but the lady, who thought ſhe had

conviction of his guilt in the letter, and who had been well kept up in her reſentment ever ſince, by the ſame hand, told him with a very ſevere look: "Sir, you have "convinced me, that you can be baſe to "two women; but I have not, nor ever in-"tend to have proof, that you can be juſt "to one. There was a time when I thought "better of you than you deſerved. I am "very happily undeceived in you; and you "can now only ſhew your prudence, by "not attempting ſo loſt a game as the "fooling me again."

CHAP. IV.

Hiſtory of Miſs Harriet Wiſewood.

THUS ended the moſt hopeful and the moſt promiſing amour that our general lover had ever been engaged in. The lady had too much obſtinacy to be ſet right, and the lover too much pride to take any pains about doing it: they ſaw one another no more from this inſtant, except in public, and there with all the indifference of the moſt abſolute ſtrangers.

Scarce any incident of this gallant gentleman's life had given him however ſo ſenſible an uneaſineſs, as he felt for three hours after his diſmiſſion from this lady's ſervice; and this might, perhaps, have been of

much longer continuance, but for an accident. The ſcene of this fatal action had been in the park: the lady, after the ſolemn denunciation of her will and pleaſure, delivered in the concluſion of the laſt chapter, ſtalk'd indignant through the ſtable-yard gate, and the abandon'd lover took up his forlorn ſeat on the bench that fronts that place, to watch her parting ſteps as far as he could ſee them, and then to lament the loſs. He indulged a very conſiderable part of his time of mourning in ſitting with arms acroſs, and with ſuch down-caſt looks, as engaged the centinel whoſe poſt was neareſt, to watch him very narrowly, that he did not do violence on his perſon. The fear, indeed, was needleſs; the ſoldier did not know how very very dear Mr. Loveill's perſon was to him. At the end of a long reverie, he ſtarted from his ſeat, looked wildly round about him, and then took as long ſtrides homeward as his long legs would let him.

The firſt object that met his eyes on his entering his chamber, was a card directed in a female hand, and folded with a great deal of irregularity: on opening it, he found it brought him the compliments of Mrs. Wiſewood, and her niece, who were juſt come from the place where he had ſpent the laſt ſix or ſeven years of his life

life in proſecuting his ſtudies, and who had made it their firſt care on arriving in London, to enquire him out, and ſend him notice of their deſire of his company.

The cloſer a man applies to his more ſerious ſtudies, the more neceſſity he has of unbending at times to give him new attention for an after-hour. The general miſtake of young people is, to fly for this relief to the jovial fellows and the bottle; but Loveill had not only a diſtaſte for the noiſy mirth of that ſpecies of fools called the good fellows, and a want of reliſh for the inſpiring bottle itſelf, but he had been ſo much in earneſt in what he was about, as to have weigh'd the conſequence of every thing that but accidentally related to it; and had found that this, which was flown to as the reſource of new attention, was in reality the very bane of it; an infatuating pleaſure that taught men nothing but a more and more high and eager reliſh for itſelf, and not only delayed their application to ſtudy, but even incapacitated them for it. On this principle he had abjur'd the tavern; and flying for relief to the people who did not drink, he was naturally led to ſeek it among the ladies.

Mrs.

Mrs. Wiſewood was one of thoſe old ladies who are very fond of the character of a ſuperior wiſdom and knowledge; but ſhe had added a very ſingular and uncommon paſſion to it, which was a deſire of attaining thoſe very qualities which ſhe wanted to be celebrated for: with this view ſhe had determined to ſeek out the reſorts of the wiſeſt and moſt learned men, and endeavour to improve herſelf by their acquaintance. Her fortune was independent: it was a thing of no conſequence to her affairs where ſhe lived, and ſhe was therefore eaſily determined to make choice of one of the towns in which our univerſities are, for her place of reſidence.

People's characters are ſoon known in theſe places. It was no ſooner buzzed about in Loveill's ears, that ſuch a ſort of woman was come to the town, or in hers that there was ſuch a man as Mr. Loveill in the univerſity, than they found they were mutually cut out for one another; and, as the lady's time of life was ſuch, as to put her out of the ſuſpicion of an intrigue, and Loveill's ſobriety and regular way of living was at that time enough, if there had been no other reaſon, to ſecure her character from cenſure with him; they ſoon met, and as ſoon entered into

into all that familiarity that people of ſenſe give into, in the place of ceremony and compliment.

The leiſure time of Mr. Loveill was all ſpent at this lady's houſe, and ſhe was as happy in receiving the advantage of his ſtudies at ſecond hand, as he in an opportunity of imprinting them infinitely more ſtrongly than could any other way be done in his own mind, by repeating the ſubſtance of them to her at the diſtance of a few hours from the reading.

The whole family this lady brought with her to this ſeat of erudition, was, beſide two ſervants, a niece of eleven years old, who was the companion of her aunt in Loveill's abſence, and of her doll or play-thing while he was preſent. The mirth of this little lady was too pleaſing to the grave Mr. Loveill, not to give a reaſon of his requeſting that ſhe might be always with them. The interruptions ſhe ſometimes gave their moſt ſerious diſcourſes, by intreating them to admire the ſet of her child's cap, or to new-pin its ruffles, often provoked the old lady, whoſe natural diſpoſition, from one of the moſt benevolent in the world, was by age grown a little teſty; but Loveill, who was incapable of diſcompoſure, never failed to make up theſe little breaches, and gave the

the lady an example of patience and good-nature which ſhe at length came wholly into the imitation of.

The ſubject of the converſation between the aunt and her ſerious companion had one day run upon the rational entertainments of the human mind. Loveill had avoided the deeper reſearches of philoſophy, and entered upon thoſe which were moſt familiar, and moſt immediately in every body's reach. He had been very full upon the ſubject of the extent and greatneſs of the human underſtanding in its leaſt inſtructed ſtate, and very free upon the ſubject of the neglect and abuſes of it; when the young lady, who had been employed in a corner of the room in the uſual way of people of her age, got up at length in a fury, threw her doll to the ground, and with tears in her eyes and many a hearty ſob, ran up to Loveill's knee, and told him, ſhe would never play with ſuch fooliſh things again. Loveill was tranſported at the ſenſe and reſolution of the child. He deſired the old lady to furniſh her with more rational entertainments; and ſhe was ſo much of his mind, that at his next viſit he found the play-things baniſhed, and two or three very well choſen books in their place.

From

From this hour the little lady made one of their company; and Loveill, fond of having an improving pupil to work upon inſtead of a decaying one, bent all his thoughts upon forming the mind of this growing genius to its utmoſt perfection. His doctrines from this time deſcended into more and more familiar, till he brought down his diſcourſe by degrees to the firſt principles of human knowledge.

The old lady had diſcernment enough to ſee his drift, but ſhe had alſo underſtanding enough to be pleaſed with it: ſhe could not but join in the opinion that her niece was a more proper perſon for his ſcholar, than herſelf; and, as ſhe was very ſenſible ſhe ſhould be a ſharer in all his inſtructions to her, ſhe was not diſpleaſed to ſee a regular courſe of them begun from the loweſt principles, though ſhe had had too much pride to deſcend ſo low in her own proper leſſons.

Mrs. Wiſewood had a veneration for her inſtructor, little leſs than adoration. When he was preſent, nothing paſſed beſide his own converſation, but queſtions put to his deciſion, which was eſteemed oracular, and beyond all diſpute or controverſy; and, when he was abſent, the only topic of her converſation with her niece was his praiſe; and their great employment,

ployment, the remembering and repeating what he had been ſaying to them. The old lady found all other company ſo inſipid to her underſtanding, that ſhe avoided it; and, for many years after this, the ladies viſited no body abroad, and no body was ſuffered to interrupt the happy party at home.

Loveill, whoſe mind was wholly bent on the improving his little ſcholar, was happy in finding her eternally ready for inſtruction in his preſence, eternally buſy'd in preparing herſelf for it in his abſence. Her morning was ſpent with her maſters, which were of his chuſing; and the reſt of the day, when he was from her, in reading paſſages which he had ſelected for her.

The aunt had form'd no leſs ideas than of making her niece the greateſt ſcholar of the age; and thought that Latin, Greek and Hebrew, would be ſoon made familiar to her; but her inſtructor thought otherwiſe: he told her, that a knowledge of Greek and Latin, and much more of Hebrew, were but an affected pedantry in a woman; that all this was but the knowledge of words; and, that he ſhould attempt to teach her things, not ſounds. That moſt of the good books had been well tranſlated into her own language; and

that

that the better part of what had not been ſo, he would inſtruct her in. French was the only language he allowed her, beſide her own; and this he gave but little time to, as rather ornamental than abſolutely neceſſary.

He had taken this infant genius under his tuition juſt at the time when it was ready for all impreſſions, and had ſcarce taken any; the love the young lady conceived for knowledge, the only thing that ſhe heard mentioned as the ſubject of praiſe in the only company ſhe kept, made her all attention to the means; and an ambition of deſerving the praiſe of ſo great judges, as ſhe conceived her aunt and her inſtructor to be, made her indefatigable in her private application. Every thing conſpired to promote the ſcheme; and, in about three years, Loveill had the pleaſure to find her a perfect miſtreſs of the Roman hiſtory, familiar with the ſenſe of all the Claſſics, perfectly acquainted with every thing in Ariſtotle that was worth knowing, and capable of deſpiſing the reveries of Malbranche, of laughing at the metaphyſically mad Berkley, where he did not underſtand himſelf, and, even of accuſing her favourite Locke, of ſometimes running into the ſame ſort of obſcurity.

She repreſented to her thoughts the perſon who had taught her to ſee the errors of the greateſt men that had wrote, as infinitely greater than them all; and was eternally congratulating herſelf and her aunt on the happineſs of having the acquaintance of ſuch a genius. The aunt was taught by what ſhe knew of Loveill, added to the common fame he had in the place, to think little leſs of him; and this implicit faith in every thing he delivered to them was no ſmall advantage to them in the retaining and improving by it.

Before Loveill left the univerſity, his pupil, to ſay a great deal leſs than ſhe deſerves, was by much the moſt accompliſhed woman of the age. A ſincere ſorrow on all parts appeared on his leaving the place; and the ladies, who could find no converſation tolerable to them when he was abſent, no ſooner heard that he had finiſhed his rambles, and was come to London, than they determined to follow him. In conſequence of this reſolution, the old lady had ſettled all her affairs, and was arrived in London, and juſt ſettled in her new lodgings, when ſhe had given her niece orders to write that card which Loveill found upon his table; and the bearer of which had orders, if he had found

found him at home, to have brought him with him.

Loveill felt a ſincere joy on reading the invitation, and immediately obeyed it. He entered the room with all the familiarity of their former acquaintance, but he was ſurpriſed at ſeeing the ladies avoid him in a ſtrange ſort of fright and confuſion: the aunt was no ſooner recovered out of this than ſhe very politely addreſſed herſelf to him, and told him, "Sir, I believe here is a miſtake among us, but it will be eaſily rectified: we have directed a card to a gentleman of the name of Loveill, who is of our intimate acquaintance; and I preſume your name being the ſame has occaſioned the miſtake of its falling into your hands."

Loveill had no ſooner uttered the firſt word of his anſwer to this, than his voice convinced the ladies of their miſtake: they teſtified their joy at ſeeing him, and at the ſame time their ſurpriſe at the ſtrange metamorphoſis of his outſide, from the plain and decent garb of the ſtudent, to the powder and embroidery of the greateſt beau of the town. Loveill, who had worn this ſort of dreſs ever ſince the affair of Lady Juliet, did not recollect the occaſion of their ſurpriſe, till he was told of it; he immediately joined in the laugh at a

folly the faſhion of the times compelled him to give into, and told them that whatever might have befallen his outſide, his heart and thoughts were ſtill the ſame they uſed to be.

Miſs Harriet (that was the name of the lady's niece) had pined with a diſcontent, that ſhe had not fully diſcloſed to her aunt from the day that Loveill took his leave of them: ſhe had indulg'd her thoughts to the utmoſt in the eſteem and veneration ſhe had conceiv'd for her inſtructor, but till this moment when her inſtructor and the gay fine fellow appear'd in the ſame perſon, ſhe had not found out that eſteem and love when a man is the object, are in a woman's breaſt very much the ſame.

She had infinite joy in the ſight of him, but ſhe had alſo a thouſand terrors; ſhe wiſh'd her aunt to aſk him many queſtions, that ſhe wanted to be reſolved of, but which would have come much better from any body than her-ſelf: Tir'd of waiting for the old lady's recollection, her impatience at length made her aſk him herſelf, if he was married ſince they ſaw him? He told her, no. She purſued her ſucceſs by adding, are you about it? He anſwered her with ſome emotion, *no*, *upon my honour*. Harriet teſtify'd the ſincere tranſport of her heart at this anſwer, with her tears.

There

There was not need of this accident to call up all the attention of Loveill, who was now become the gallanteſt fellow in the world in regard to his pupil. She was now at that age when every thing of woman-kind is handſome: ſhe was juſt ſeventeen; her complexion was clear, her features regular, and ſhe had with all this bloom and beauty a ſoul that ſpoke in every look, and would have made deformity agreeable.

It was about a year ſince Loveill had left her; and though he had always before conſidered her ſo perfectly in the light of a child, as to exclude all thoughts of a miſtreſs, he now fell into all the exceſs of paſſion in a inſtant. He bleſs'd the good fortune that had diſappointed him of every body he had aim'd at; and returning the lady's queſtions upon herſelf, he no ſooner received the ſame negatives for anſwer, than he with a very joyous countenance told her, he was glad of it; and added, in all the freedom of their old acquaintance, that he ſhould endeavour to obtain her aunt's permiſſion and hers, to marry her himſelf.

Good ſenſe and freedom are ever companions to one another. The old lady told Loveill, that ſhe dared ſay he could gueſs what would be her reſolution about

it: and the young one, with a ſmile that ſpoke great contentment, reply'd, don't be angry that I ſhall not diſſemble with you; 'tis an art that you have never taught me: but you have taught me that marriage is a thing both parties ought to think very ſeriouſly about, before they engage in it.

The converſation, for the reſt of the evening, paſs'd upon ſtories of old times; and the lovers were not more happy in the proſpect of the alliance, than the old lady, who told them they were Abelard and Eloiſe in all things but their vices; and that ſhe ſhould think nothing ſo great an honour to her family, as to have received ſuch a perſon into it.

CHAP. V.

A walk in the Park.—Miſs Harriet attack'd by a new lover.—Hiſtory of Sir Subtle Peacher.—A ſhort period put to a very deep ſcheme of that renowned knight.

MISS Harriet had now a part to act, which would have puzzled almoſt any woman of her delicacy, except herſelf. She ſaw every day a man whom ſhe tenderly lov'd, and who was received upon the footing

ing of a future huſband, with the perfect conſent of her friend and guardian; whom it was death to her to ſpeak coldly to, and yet who had ſo newly made his addreſſes to her on the ſcore of love, that it was too violent a force upon the decency of her ſex to receive them freely.

Her natural good ſenſe however dictated to her the true, the only method of proceeding. She neither acknowledg'd her love, nor deny'd it; ſhe received all his civilities as not diſpleaſed with them, nor anxious for them; and threw all the paſſion of her heart into the form of eſteem, inſtead of that of love: ſhe appear'd to reſpect and reverence him as her guide, her inſtructor, and her friend, rather than to ſigh for him as a huſband, and nicely kept up the ſpirit of her regard for him, without betraying the true nature of it.

Loveill, who had from the firſt moment they had converſed together on the ſubject, determined to look no farther for a wife, was raptured with this delicacy of diſtinction in her: he told her he ſaw all the perplexity her heart was engaged in; that he was confident ſhe was the only woman in the world who could have faſhion'd her conduct rightly under it; and added, *my moſt charming Harrie*, (ſo he had been

us'd to nick-name her while his ſcholar) *you are the only woman in whom diſſembling ever was a virtue.* The lady, with a modeſty peculiar to herſelf, reply'd, you have taught me, Sir, too well to guard againſt the ſubtleties of men, to have left even yourſelf the power to enſnare me into the declaring more than I ought. I know the exact value of the bait you have laid for me in this extravagant praiſe, and have nothing to anſwer, but that I am indeed ſo honeſt, that my words and actions truly ſpeak my Thoughts, tho' I have no power to prevent your underſtanding them in what light you pleaſe.

The good old lady declar'd, that love had improv'd in her niece, what ſhe before thought as perfect as nature would allow of; and added to Loveill, that this was the only thing he had left her to herſelf in, but that ſhe thought, to her credit, that ſhe was at leaſt equal in this to any part of her other conduct.

A thouſand things of the ſame civil and ſenſible kind paſs'd between theſe three happy people. Theſe are enough to explain the opinion they had of one another; and to give the reader a hint, that the adventures of the variable lover, who is the ſubject of theſe memoirs, ſeem'd drawing near a period.

Nothing

Nothing could equal the pleaſure with which this agreeable party now ran over the diverſions of the town. The ladies had all the additional pleaſure in them that novelty could give; and the lover, who was a perfect maſter of every thing that related to them, introduced them every where at the moſt favourable times, and ſhewed them every thing when it was moſt of all worth being ſeen.

Among the variety of entertainments that this region of delight affords, nothing equall'd in theſe ladies opinion that of a ſaunter in the Park, at that time of day when it was fulleſt of company, and their learning from their attendant beau, who knew almoſt every body by acquaintance, and could deſcribe the few that he had no familiarity with pretty nearly as well by their looks, what was the peculiar character of the people who made the moſt remarkable figure in that motley multitude. Half a dozen walks of this kind, had made theſe country ladies as perfectly acquainted with all that was worth knowing of the whole polite world then in London, as if they had ſpent their whole lives in it; they could tell one another, if they ſaw *Horatio* paſs by, there goes a man, who under a very paltry figure, carries as great a genius, and as free a ſoul, as the nobleſt worthy

of antiquity; or if they ſaw the titled *Aſinio* peep from behind a corner of his hat, could ſay with a juſt indignation, there ſkulks a fellow who makes honours infamous.

Loveill had one day been ſomewhere abſent from them, when there appear'd, at one of their park-viſits, a new figure in the Mall that drew almoſt every body's attention. The ladies were mightily taken with the gaity of the ſtranger's appearance, and the elegance of his deportment. They paid a ſort of attention to him, which had like to have drawn them into a ſcrape: the object of their obſervation had penetration enough to find that he was ſo; he had alſo a good opinion enough of himſelf to think, that every body who thought of him, thought favourably of him; and in conſequence of this happy diſpoſition, he with an eaſy freedom made up to them, and thank'd them for the honour of being judged worthy their notice.

The conſequence of this attack was the ladies leaving the place, and determining never to come into it again without their guardian and protector; but the effect it had upon the beau was different: he ſoon found the young lady was not indifferent to him; and he flatter'd his own vanity ſo far as to miſunderſtand ſome looks ſhe gave

gave him at parting, and which ſhe, who ſeldom miſs'd expreſſing what ſhe meant that way, intended ſhou'd declare her contempt and deteſtation of his unmannerly familiarity, into declarations of love and entreaties of ſeeing him again. He tripp'd up to the hinder chairman who was carrying the young lady, and whiſper'd him to return for him, as ſoon as he had ſet down his fare.

The ladies at their return home found their friend Loveill at the door enquiring for them: he preſs'd them to go back to the Park, but the young lady abſolutely refus'd, and inſiſting on his going up, told him the adventure. Loveill laugh'd at the diſtreſs and confuſion this notable attempt had thrown them into, and conjecturing about who it could be that ſhould be juſt come to town, and ſhould anſwer to the character they gave of their new humble ſervant, he ſoon revolv'd over the people he had left at Bath, and recollecting himſelf haſtily, ſaid to Harriet, if he was a very handſome fellow, with very piercing black eyes, a remarkably genteel deportment, red heels, and a feather, by the additional character of his complaiſant impertinence, it could be no other than the fam'd *Sir Subtle Peacher*.

The old lady ſmiling upon her niece, cry'd out, What a deſcription! Sir, (continu'd ſhe) we are very confident you are not miſtaken in the man.—I need not aſk her opinion. There is, adds the lover, one character more, which if it anſwers, you are ſure of him: he is the only man, with the figure of a gentleman, whom no gentleman ever ſpeaks to. This circumſtance agreed with the new gallant, as well as the reſt; and Loveill told his miſtreſs, in conſequence of the diſcovery, that nothing was more certain than that if ſhe pleas'd, ſhe mightly extremely eaſily add one to the fourteen *lady Peachers* that were already ſcatter'd about in the ſeveral parts of Europe.

So remarkable a ſet of circumſtances, in regard to this gentleman, could not but intereſt the curioſity of the ladies in the reſt that belong'd to him: and Loveill, at their requeſt, thus gave them the whole character.

The gentleman to whom we are obliged for the preſent ſubject of our converſation, is now barely four and twenty. He accidentally came by the title I have named to you, at the age of ſeventeen: he was about the tenth perſon in the line; but fortune took care to make way for bringing his great talents into the world, by taking off

off the nine that ſtood before him, by the help of good Yorkſhire ale, and ſome five-bar'd gates. *Sir Subtle*, whoſe unlucky name ſeems to have given his mind the firſt turn towards the miſchievous bent it has taken, was at this time a rude boy, employed in robbing all the orchards and fiſhponds within ten miles round the family-ſeat, which was in an obſcure corner of the largeſt county in England.

The neighbourhood had ſeen the title, in the ſpace of a few years, deſcend thro' a ſeries of Sir James, Sir Cowper, Sir Roger, and a long *et cetera*, all labouring to prove the truth of what the old poet ſaid two thouſand years ago on the ſubject of the degeneracy of the world; that our wicked fathers begot ſons more wicked than they, doomed to ſend into the world a progeny ſuperior in ill to themſelves. The clowns, who ſpoke no Latin, expreſſed much the ſame ſenſe, by repeating at every revolution the good old proverb, that when the old one's gone, there ſeldom comes a better; and plainly enough foreſaw the ruin of that eſtate, which tho' bad enough at firſt, every one of theſe tranſitory poſſeſſors took care to leave to his ſucceſſor conſiderably worſe than he found it.

The tenth baronet, if he had been bred up to the joys of the bottle and pipe as regularly as his brothers and uncles, would have made his way through the laſt penny of it in a twelvemonth; but fate had deſtin'd him for other purpoſes. He had ſenſe enough to find, that he could not long keep up the dignity of his title upon five hundred pounds, (for this was the utmoſt that his tattered remnant of the eſtate was worth) in a place where the ſtrength of his finances were known to every body: he ſold off the lumber of the manor-houſe, left the ſervants without paying them their wages, and took a place in the ſtage-coach for London.

He concluded very juſtly, that a man of faſhion and title, with ſome money, in London, where his affairs were known to no body, might get credit for more: he took lodgings in a genteel ſtreet, ſent for his taylor who was to equip him for being truſted by other people; hired an equipage that was to give him a farther ſanction in things of conſequence; and at the end of a year, which he had ſpent in great ſplendor, he found it proper to avoid the trouble of being dunned by his creditors, by taking a trip to Boulogne, where, when he had ſettled his affairs, and ſold the goods of various kinds which he had been picking

up from time to time with that intent, he found himſelf three hundred pounds richer than when he had left Yorkſhire.

He had thus ſpent a year very pleaſantly, but very idly; and he had wit enough to find, that he ſhould not be able to make his late method of traffick a trade for life: he had found out that he was handſome, that he had ſome wit, and a conſiderable ſhare of impudence; and on the ſtrength of theſe qualifications, with the additional benefit of a laced coat and a title, he found himſelf the propereſt man for a fortune-hunter that ever the world produced. He ſoon perceived it was in vain to attempt this in Boulogne, where long experience has taught the people that every Engliſhman among them is a beggar and a raſcal: he determined to loſe no time in a place where every body knew his character, without ſo much as enquiring after his name; and very prudently ſet out on the tour of Europe.

He has ſpent the four or five laſt years in this expedition; and tho' he has ſucceeded ſo well in his attempts on the ladies as to be fourteen times married, and every time to a woman of ſome fortune; he has been ſo extravagant into the bargain, that when he determined about a twelvemonth ago to reviſit his native country under the

character of a fugitive for debt, cleared by the late act of inſolvency, he found it impoſſible to raiſe money to pay his paſſage, otherwiſe than by an action for which he deſerved ſomething more than hanging.

You now, Madam, continued Loveill, ſee him flouriſhing upon the ſpoils of that ſtratagem; and if you have compaſſion enough for a man of parts in diſtreſs, you may, if you pleaſe, be his firſt Engliſh wife, and keep him above ground a year or two beyond his preſent deſtin'd period, which I am apt to believe there needs not the gift of prophecy to foreſee not to be many months off.

The ladies had not time to thank Loveill for this remarkable ſtory, when a genteel rap at the door preceded a queſtion in a chairman's voice to the ſervant who opened it, enquiring, if the young lady was above whom he had a little while before brought home? Our country ladies had few viſitors, and had not yet found the neceſſity of bidding their ſervants deny them to any body. The anſwer was, yes; and the gay Sir Subtle, who had by means of the chairman found who the ladies were, and where they lodged, and had been informed before he ventured to make his viſit, that they lived alone, and kept ſcarce

any

any company, appeared with a very graceful bow at the entrance of the room.

He was going up to the young lady with great formality to ſalute her, when he ſaw at about the middle way Mr. Loveill, who was ſhewing his contempt of him by ſtanding with his hands behind him, and with his back to the fire, and whom the edge of a ſcreen had till then hid from his ſight.

The appearance of a gay fellow, ſo familiar as Loveill's poſture expreſſed him to be, in a family where he had expected no ſuch acquaintance, diſconcerted Sir Subtle's whole ſcheme: he forgot in an inſtant all the fine things he had prepar'd himſelf to ſay, and with a pale face, and fallen lip, ſtood motionleſs in the middle of the room to receive the contemptuous ſmile of the eaſy Loveill, and the pert raillery of the young lady, who with a very low curt'ſy, aſk'd him, pray, ſweet Mr. Adventurer, which of all your dozen laſt marriage-propoſals do you intend me the honour of entertaining me at ſecond hand with?

The knight was thunderſtruck with a reproach, that carry'd with it a proof that his hiſtory was too well known in London. If he had made a very contemptible figure before, he now alter'd it for one a little

worſe.

worſe. His confuſion however was but for a moment: he recovered his thoughts, and turning about to the old lady with a great deal of modeſty and reſpect, and with a world of affected ſurpriſe and innocence in his countenance, taking a ſnuff-box of conſiderable value out of his pocket, he offered it to her with theſe words, I find, Madam, I am unhappy enough not to have the honour of being known in your family: The occaſion of my intruding upon you was to return this box, which I found on the ſeat of a chair I got into in the Park, and which I cannot be miſtaken as to the owner of, ſince I ordered the chairmen to carry me to the houſe of the laſt perſon they had ſet down.

The ſeeming ſincerity with which this was delivered, would have deceiv'd almoſt any body, that had not been let into the hiſtory of the gentleman who gave it, into a belief that he had only been guilty of a miſtake; but the old lady anſwered him with a contemptuous ſmile, Sir, the box muſt needs be in its owner's hands at preſent, ſince no body of this family has added to nature's wants that which it contains the ſupply for. As ſhe was delivering this, the box by ſome accident fell out of the knight's hand, and opening by the force

force of the fall, diſcovered a miniature of his own face in the lid. The ſharpey'd Harriet did not let this paſs; but telling him, that he did her great honour to ſuppoſe ſhe carry'd his picture about her, added, I wonder, Sir, that a man of your diſcernment don't ſee that you have nothing to do but to get away from this place at any rate, as faſt as you can.

This ſevere ſpeech pretty plainly told him that worſe would follow if he did not obey it. He took the lady's advice, gave her a very reſpectful bow, and told her he was indeed ſenſible that he had been guilty of a miſtake; and making his way down ſtairs at three ſteps, huddled into his chair again.

CHAP. VI.

Miſs Harriet receives a viſit from her couſin Eaſy.—An accident not very favourable to Mr. Loveill happens at it.

THE gallant knight, whom we have had occaſion juſt now to relate the hiſtory of, had among a great many ill qualities ſome, which under better management would have proved very good ones. Of the number of theſe were a great clearneſs of thought, an uncommon ſagacity, and

and at leaſt as large a ſhare of courage as a wiſe man would wiſh to be poſſeſs'd of.

He had been uſed to ſucceſs in his attempts upon the ladies, and could brook but very ill the rude rebuff he had met with at Mrs. Wiſewood's. A man of his diſcernment could not miſs ſeeing that the miſcarriage of his attack at this place was wholly owing to the gentleman, whom he found in poſſeſſion of the poſt he wanted; and who he could ſee had exerted much more inſolence in the triumph of the ladies, than if himſelf had taken any part in it.

The abſolute ſilence on Loveill's part, and his affected indolence and inattention to ſo intereſting a ſcene, declared alſo to his rival a confidence in the lady's attachment to him, and at the ſame time a contempt of his perſon and pretenſions, which kindled a jealouſy and revenge that demanded no common ſacrifice to appeaſe them.

He had readily recollected, that this was the man who had made all the confuſion at Bath the laſt ſeaſon, and had an additional cauſe for vengeance againſt him on account of another rivalſhip between them while at that place, in which Loveill had contrived to make him cut a very paltry figure, but which was of too trivial a nature to find a place among his more important actions regiſter'd in theſe memoirs.

Sir

Sir Subtle now doubly knew him for a man of addreſs and of infinite artifice: he rank'd him fairly in his mind as the man, of all others he had met with, the moſt likely to ſucceed in an amour againſt all the oppoſition in the world: but tho' he thought better of him than of any body he knew in the world, he thought yet better of himſelf; and partly in the pride of ſupplanting him, and partly in abſolute revenge, he determin'd to apply all his artifice to undo him with Miſs Harriet.

Loveill and the ladies had ſcarce done laughing at the defeat of the moſt impudent fellow upon earth, (not excepting even the gentleman to whom a pamphlet was lately dedicated under that title,) when they receiv'd a card from a pretty couſin of Miſs Harriet's, inviting herſelf to drink tea with them. Our happy party, though they never wanted any additional perſon to add to their entertainment, made it a rule never to refuſe any body, who had any right to expect leave to join with them: their compliments were returned, and the good-natur'd *Miſs Eaſy* was preſently with them.

Every woman is proud to tell of a conqueſt, be it ever ſo contemptible a one. The viſitor was ſcarce ſeated, before the charming Harriet, impatient to tell her of the laſt

laſt effect of her charms, related to her the whole ſtory of *Sir Subtle*, only in prudence omitting the name. The laugh was high againſt the defeated fortune-hunter; and there was not an incident in the ſtory, that the viſitor miſs'd finding ſufficient occaſion of diverſion in.

Miſs Eaſy is one of thoſe few good-natur'd people who have ſome ſenſe; and of thoſe yet fewer, who, though very able to talk well themſelves, had rather hear other people do ſo. Where Loveill falls into company, people are generally fond of giving him occaſion to be the ſpeaker; and particularly in a family where he was in a manner ador'd and reverenc'd, as in this, 'tis no wonder that he found occaſion of talking more than any body elſe. *Sir Subtle* was too contemptible a rival, for him to condeſcend to triumph over: he had left the raillery behind his back, as he had done the ſeverity to his face, entirely to Miſs Harriet; and the diſcourſe turn'd upon other ſubjects, till at ſupper, by ſome odd accident, the name of the knight, which had till then been conceal'd, ſlipp'd from the lips of the old lady. Miſs Eaſy ſtarted at the ſound, and with the utmoſt amazement enquir'd, whether that was the name of the hero of the ſtory they had told her at her entering the room. She

was

was no ſooner anſwer'd in the affirmative, than ſhe burſt out into an exclamation; O vanity! vanity! how abſolute is thy dominion over my poor ſex! My dear dear coz, (continued ſhe) there is no doubt but you deſerve all the lovers in the world; but I muſt mortify you by telling you, that you have no ſhare in that gentleman. I know every thing very well that relates to him, not excepting even this ſtory; only I did not know, that the pert country wench he deſcribes as the heroine of it, was my dear couſin Harriet.

The ladies were not a little amaz'd, that Miſs Eaſy ſhou'd be ſo very well inform'd of the affairs of a man, whom Loveill had repreſented to them as one not extremely proper for the acquaintance of a perſon of her ſtamp; and more ſo, that ſhe ſhou'd have ſuch early intelligence of an affair, in which no body but himſelf cou'd give it, and yet which it was moſt extremely his intereſt to be ſilent about. They entreated her to tell them what more ſhe knew about this gallant knight; and both the old lady and her niece were ſtrangely perplexed, not only in regard to him, but to their friend Loveill too, whoſe intelligence, tho' delivered ſo very poſitively, and with ſuch an hiſtorical exactneſs, agreed very ill with her account of him, when ſhe continued

to

to tell them, that to her certain knowledge he was a man of very conſiderable fortune in the weſt of Scotland, and was at this time engag'd, with the conſent of the relations on both ſides, to one of the greateſt fortunes in town. She added, that he had courted this lady for the three laſt years; and that as to the affair of the box, which had occaſioned their ſeeing him, it was a very true one; that they had miſtook the picture in the lid, which was no other than Lord Bawble's; and in fine, that he had found out by enquiring of the chairmen who they carried laſt before Miſs Harriet, that it belonged to Lady Bawble; that he had delivered it back to her; that my lord, who knew him very well, had engag'd him to dine there; and ſhe did not doubt but they were all together at that time.

This was not only ſo amazingly different a ſtory from that which Loveill had told them of this gentleman, but the matter of his three years courtſhip to the lady he was now engag'd to, ſo evidently contradicted the greateſt part of that account, that Miſs Harriet, in whoſe ſtomach the appellation of *pert country wench* broil'd very ſeverely, whiſper'd her aunt, and with a mixture of anger and concern told her, I am ſorry to find that Mr. Loveill is not the open generous

nerous man we took him for. He did not know of this gentleman's engagements; and all that he has ſaid of him is plainly the ungenerous malice of a terrify'd rival.

Loveill ſaw this ſentence in the young lady's eyes, tho' he did not hear it. He took the only way of explaining the thing which had been the occaſion of it, by aſking Miſs Eaſy how long ſhe had been thus well acquainted with this gentleman? Her anſwer was, that ſhe had never ſeen him in her life, and therefore was quite a diſintereſted perſon; but that all the world knew the truth of what ſhe had been ſaying, and that ſhe had heard the whole hiſtory of the ſnuff-box that afternoon, from unqueſtionable authority. The ladies knew the candour of their couſin too well to ſuſpect her of falſity, and were too much prejudic'd againſt Loveill, to hear any thing from him that tended to invalidate her teſtimony.

The moſt violent of all enmities are thoſe which ſucceed to the ſtricteſt friendſhips. Loveill ſacrificed by this afternoon's hiſtory the merit of a life of good offices; and appear'd from the moment Miſs Eaſy had told her ſtory, inſtead of the open generous lover, the jealous, the ſuſpecting, and the ſelf-intereſted deceiver. He found it in vain to offer any thing in his own

cauſe, and had generoſity enough to excuſe the reſentment of Miſs Harriet, when he conſider'd how much reaſon there appear'd for it.

He knew the character of the perſon who was the ſubject of their quarrel, well enough to ſuſpect from him every thing that cunning cou'd put into the heart of man on ſuch an occaſion; but he alſo knew very well he cou'd believe this lady that ſhe had never ſeen him, and the very little time that had paſs'd between his viſit and her explanation of it, ſeem'd to give ſo little room for the ſuſpecting him concern'd in it, that he began to curſe mere accident, that had miſ-inform'd her about him at ſo unlucky a juncture.

Any man elſe wou'd have reſted in a determination founded on ſo ſeemingly good reaſons as this appear'd to be; but Loveill had carry'd an uncommon natural ſagacity farther than any body elſe ever dream'd of: he threw the diſcourſe from this time on other ſubjects, he prais'd Miſs Eaſy's complexion, and with a ſeeming inattention, and in the tone of voice that people generally deliver the moſt indifferent things in the world in, told her, her hair ſat well, and aſk'd her couſin who was their operator. The unſuſpecting *Miſs Harriet* anſwer'd, *Monſieur Frize*;

Frize; and with a contemptuous ſmile told him, he was extremely happy in his topics of converſation. While Loveill aſk'd Miſs Harriet the queſtion that gave occaſion for this piece of raillery, his eyes were very carefully bent upon Miſs Eaſy, but that in ſuch a manner, that ſhe cou'd not perceive he minded her. The colour that over-ſpread her face at the inſtant when her couſin pronounc'd the name of *Frize*, plainly declar'd that it was a queſtion ſhe wou'd not have anſwer'd, and that ſhe knew the ſubtle enquirer aſk'd ſome body elſe, becauſe he knew ſhe wou'd not. She found ſhe was diſcover'd; and nothing but the maſterly addreſs with which Loveill contriv'd not to let her ſee that he obſerv'd her, cou'd have prevented her explaining herſelf, to avoid any imputation from an after diſcovery; which ſhe only ſuppoſed might not be made, becauſe the perſon concern'd ſhe thought had not obſerv'd her.

This agreeable ſet of company never till this evening were tir'd of one another. Loveill ſaw plainly enough they now wiſh'd him at the devil, that they might have opportunity for ſome farther talk with Miſs Eaſy; he knew however that this was not his intereſt, and obſtinately kept his poſt. Miſs Eaſy more and more clearly perceiv'd, as ſhe reflected on the circumſtances, that ſhe

was better underſtood than ſhe intended to be, and waited his abſence to explain what ſhe cou'd not ſo well do before him. She ſaw at length that he wou'd ſtay till the next morning if ſhe did, and was forc'd to take her leave. The complaiſant Loveill wou'd wait on her to her chair, to prevent any opportunity of her ſpeaking in private to her couſin; and as he put her into it, he whiſper'd her, "I love you very well, "young lady, and ſhall prevent your ruin- "ing your character for ſincerity another "time, by affirming things too boldly from "authorities you are aſham'd of."

Loveill's buſineſs for the night was now over; he cooly put on his ſword and gloves, and taking leave of the young lady with a very tender kiſs, he told her in her aunt's hearing; "Deareſt Harriet, I "ought to be angry with your want of con- "fidence in me. Love does not exiſt with- "out it. But it will be better to throw "the cenſure upon your underſtanding, "and teach you hereafter not be ſo eaſily "impos'd on."

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The diſcovery of a ſtrange plot.

THE ſerious reproof with which Loveill took his leave of his miſtreſs, made her almoſt reſolve againſt her ſenſes, that not he but herſelf had been to blame. The old lady was leſs favourable in her opinion of him, and both waited the morning with impatience, to know what he cou'd plead in excuſe for the having ſo ſcandalouſly impos'd upon them, and ſacrificed the character of a worthy man, to what now appear'd to them only an ill-grounded ſuſpicion. The lover himſelf cou'd not blame the part he ſaw his miſtreſs take in the diſpute, but he was thoroughly vexed to find what he had not before ſuſpected, that it was in the power of a raſcal to make him uneaſy with her.

He was no ſooner up than he diſpatched his ſervant to enquire among the milliners after one Frize a French hair-cutter, and to bring him immediately to him. The ſervant ſoon ſucceeded in the enquiry after a man of his eminence in his profeſſion, and with the promiſe of a new cuſtomer, brought him to his maſter.

Loveill no ſooner ſaw him in the room, than he order'd his ſervant to leave it; and locking the door, and putting the key into his pocket, he laid down his purſe on one end of his dreſſing-table, and a loaded piſtol, after carefully and cooly examining the priming of it, at the other.

The Frenchman, tho' he cou'd not conceive the occaſion of this apparatus, eaſily ſaw the terror of it; and throwing himſelf upon his knees, begg'd his honour's pardon if he had offended him in any thing, tho' he did not know what it was that he had done.

Loveill, who knew very well that the way to profit moſt of another perſon's fears is to be perfectly compos'd oneſelf, had not yet open'd his lips to the poor devil, but was compoſedly walking about the room. When he ſaw the fellow's fears were ſufficient to enſure a confeſſion, he to ſaid him "I know you to be a raſcal, "and that I ought to ſhoot you thro' the "head this moment; but I have occaſion "to be confirm'd in the truth of a thing "which I know already, from your mouth: "if you tell me the whole truth, there "are ten guineas for your honeſty; if not, "you never ſtir from this place." Monſieur, ſtill on his knees, call'd the bleſſed virgin to witneſs, that he would tell him the

the whole truth of every thing he knew; and Loveill proceeded thus; "You ſaw Sir "Subtle Peacher yeſterday at two o'clock; "you cut Miſs Eaſy's hair an hour after- "wards; you told her (according to the "cuſtom of your trade) a thouſand lies "while you were about it; theſe lies Sir "Subtle bad you tell her.—You ſee I know "the whole; but I muſt have every ſylla- "ble of it repeated from your mouth."

The Frenchman haſtily anſwer'd; "Sir, "I never ſaw the gentleman before in my "life: he ſent for Miſs Eaſy's woman to a "chandler's ſhop, and aſk'd her who cut "her hair: he took a direction to me, and "came to my lodgings; he gave me five "guineas to make an excuſe to cut her hair, "becauſe I was going out of town;—and "told me of a long ſtory about a chair, "and my Lord Bawble, and a gold ſnuff- "box; and made me ſwear I was at my "Lady Bawble's, when he came there "with the box."

Loveill commanded him to go on, till he had repeated every the minuteſt circum- ſtance that had fallen from Miſs Eaſy the night before; and when he had done, he ordered him to get up, diſcharged his piſtol out at a window, and counted into his hand the ten pieces. "You have told "me, ſays he, nothing but what I knew

" before; but it is neceſſary that you re-
" peat this in two other places. I pay you
" before-hand, becauſe your own intereſt
" will ſecure me your doing the reſt. I
" ſuppoſe you know, that if this ſtory is
" told, you will be known to be a pimp
" and a villain, and never received into
" any family again.—If you do what I or-
" der you, I keep your ſecret; if not, all
" the world knows it this morning."

The terrify'd Frenchman ſcarce leſs frighted at this threat than at the former, promis'd to do faithfully every thing he was ordered; on which Loveill told him, " You
" are firſt to go to this knight and tell him
" he did not ſee you high enough, but that
" I have bought up his ſecret at twice the
" price: then you are to tell Miſs Eaſy
" that I know this; and laſtly, you muſt
" not only tell Miſs Harriet Wiſewood the
" ſame thing in general, but repeat to her
" every ſyllable you ſaid to Miſs Eaſy, as
" nearly as poſſible in the ſame words in
" which you have told it me."

Intereſt and fear combin'd never fail'd to engage a perſon of this fellow's ſtamp; he punctually obey'd his orders, and in return for his ſeveral meſſages received from Sir Subtle a broken head, from Miſs Eaſy his pardon and a crown, and from the confounded Miſs Harriet five guineas.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

A coffeehouſe adventure—An imaginary love ſtory, with a very diſmal period.

LOVEILL had contented himſelf with ſending this fellow on a morning viſit to his miſtreſs, inſtead of making her one himſelf: the only faulty part of his character was an impatience under the ſlighteſt indignity; and in conſequence of that a fondneſs for revenge, which never let him be content with leſs than a vaſtly overmeaſure of it. His own heart, when he weighed all the circumſtances of the laſt evening's meeting, cou'd not but wholly abſolve this lady, for giving into a reſentment for which there appear'd ſuch very ſufficient reaſon: but an indignity had been done him in the tendereſt point, his character; and he cou'd not prevent indulging himſelf in a vengeance, which he knew he cou'd make very ſenſible to her, now ſhe was acquainted with her own error and his innocence, by a two days abſence.

The indulging a love of revenge on falſe principles is one of the moſt fatal follies of the human mind: it lays us open to a thouſand miſchiefs, that no prudence can foreſee or obviate; and often ruins us in the midſt of the moſt ſeeming ſecurity.

Loveill, during the time of his abſence from this lady, cou'd not deny himſelf the triumph of enquiring how it ſat upon her. He had no means of learning this but from ſome of her acquaintance, and her late arrival in London had limited that to ſo ſmall bounds, that he found no-body to enquire of, but the lady who had been the occaſion of all the miſchief between them.

His diſcovery of the plot, by which ſhe had been innocently made the tool of a cunning raſcal to diſturb the peace of her beſt friends, gave him a very fair opportunity of paying her a viſit. He waited on her on the evening of the firſt day of his abſence from Mrs. Wiſewood's. She received him with all the confuſion that is natural to an innocent offender; and after the utmoſt conceſſions, and the ſevereſt cenſures in the world on her own folly, ſhe told him, in very affecting terms, the effect his reſentment and abſence had on Miſs Harriet, and entreated him, as ſhe had been the unhappy cauſe of the breach between them, that ſhe might have the happineſs of making it up; and that he would go inſtantly with her to viſit her.

When ſhe found him averſe to this, ſhe preſs'd it with all the arguments and entreaties that good ſenſe or good nature cou'd ſuggeſt to her; but to no purpoſe.

It

It was in vain that ſhe urg'd to him the folly of puniſhing himſelf, (for that ſhe knew very well that was the caſe) as well as his miſtreſs, for a fault in which herſelf only, neither of them, were at all concerned. In vain ſhe pleaded to him the uneaſineſs and miſery it was to her to ſee two ſuch friends at variance by means of her folly; and finally, that ſhe repreſented to him in the livelieſt colours, the tears, the agonies, the diſtraction, of the moſt amiable and moſt worthy creature in the world; in whoſe generous heart, the miſery for having offended him was not proportion'd to the nature of the offence, but to his merits towards her, and was as great as were the love and gratitude that gave riſe to it.

There is an unlucky obſtinacy in the temper of man, that frequently will not let him ſubmit to a reconciliation, tho' in his heart he has thoroughly a mind to it. This diſingenuous ſtubbornneſs poſſeſs'd the whole ſoul of Loveill on this occaſion; and tho' he long'd to tell Harriet that he knew ſhe was innocent of any fault in love, he cou'd not bring himſelf to condeſcend to do it. This artful gentleman, however, never let the very ſtrongeſt of his paſſions run away with him ſo far, as to put any thing he valued into real danger, if he fore-

ſaw

ſaw it. He knew he cou'd depend upon a paſſion ſo rooted as that of this lady's for him, againſt any efforts of inconſtancy; and he therefore ventur'd to indulge his ſurly vengeance, tho' infinitely farther than a good-natur'd man ought to have done, yet as appear'd to him not farther than a man of the moſt conſummate prudence might. He was inexorable to all that this excellent advocate of his miſtreſs could plead; and even added to his pretended refuſal of believing any thing that was urg'd in her favour, many very ſharp things which he knew would be repeated to her, and which he took care ſhou'd carry a hidden ſeverity, that wou'd be felt in its full force by that unhappy creature, tho' not underſtood by the perſon who deliver'd them.

Loveill, as he left this lady's lodgings, obſerv'd a well-dreſs'd man at ſome diſtance, ſauntering about the ſtreet, whom he had alſo ſeen in the ſame odd employment as he went in, and taking him for ſome miſerable lover, pining under his cruel miſtreſs's window, he pity'd him very heartily. This gentleman, (whoſe perſon after the ſecond obſervation cou'd not but be familiar enough to Loveill to be remember'd at a third interview, at the diſtance of only a few minutes) had ſo well con-

triv'd

triv'd it, that knowing the coffee-houſe our angry lover frequented, he had got thither before him, and was ſeated in a very thoughtful poſture near the fire, when he enter'd.

Loveill was ſtartled to ſee a man there before him, whom he had known to have been for at leaſt three hours before dangling about the ſtreet, as he had done nothing ſince he left him there, but walk'd to the place where he now was. His curioſity led him to join company with him; and he no ſooner enter'd upon a converſation upon indifferent ſubjects with him, than he found he was not aſhamed of owning what he had been ſeen about, but ſeem'd particularly deſirous of engaging in a converſation upon the very ſubject of it.

Our gallant, whoſe thoughts were now full of love, and who eaſily ſaw that it was a ſtory of that kind, that was going to be divulg'd to him, told his new acquaintance, that he cou'd not but acknowledge he had obſerv'd him in a very melancholy ſituation for ſome hours. He added, that he ſhould not have preſum'd to enquire into the reaſon of it, but that he ſaw him not unwilling to explain it; and in fine concluded, "Sir, being myſelf a lover, and at this time "ſomewhat an unhappy one too, as I can "eaſily foreſee your ſtory is of that ſort, I

"may

" may promiſe you that I ſhall pay an un-
" common attention to it."

Loveill had couch'd under this formal ſpeech an earneſt curioſity for hearing a ſtory which he promis'd himſelf he ſhou'd have ſufficient occaſion to be merry about; and now compoſing his countenance in a very ſolemn way, he heard the ſtranger begin in this manner:

" You are to know, Sir, that I am the
" unhappieſt fellow at this time breathing
" in the world. I fell deſperately in love
" near a twelvemonth ago in the country.
" I found means to obtain a favourable
" reception with the lady; and as we nei-
" ther of us choſe to be ty'd down by
" prieſtcraft, we indulg'd in all the plea-
" ſures of matrimony without any of its
" plagues. We were happy enough to
" continue an intercourſe of this kind for
" a longer time than perhaps any two
" people were ever in a humour, or in a
" condition to do before.

" We were at the end of about ten
" months divorc'd from one another, for a
" few weeks, by an accident that you know
" will attend familiarities of this kind. I had
" in this compell'd abſence got a new edge
" to what was before an almoſt blunted
" appetite; and had flatter'd myſelf with a
" glorious ſcene upon our meeting again;

" but

" but ſuch is the impertinent malice of the
" place where we liv'd, that it was no ſe-
" cret that my virgin-miſtreſs had bleſs'd
" the world with a fine boy; and ſhe and
" her family thought proper to decamp,
" and get up to London as faſt as they
" cou'd; where ſhe arriv'd a maid again
" a few days ago.

" I need not tell you, Sir, continued
" the ſtranger, that I follow'd her. I no
" ſooner arriv'd in London than I found
" her out, and obtain'd a meeting with
" her. Abſence and impatience had had
" ſo good an effect upon us both, that we
" never taſted the ſweets of love with ſuch
" a reliſh. We were forc'd to part ſome-
" what ſooner than we wiſh'd, but not
" without ſettling the means of our future
" meetings; which the kind creature con-
" triv'd to be in the ſtreet where you
" ſaw me, thro' which ſhe promis'd me
" ſhe wou'd every evening trip about ſix,
" under pretence of drinking tea with a
" female friend, a couſin, who lodges in
" the very houſe where you was upon a
" viſit. Pray inform me, Sir, concluded he,
" whether you heard any thing there of a
" Miſs Harriet Wiſewood of Cambridge?
" for I have, by ſome accident I can by
" no means gueſs at, loſt her for theſe
" three days."

Loveill,

Loveill, tho' he had attended to every part of this ſtory, and from the great probability of the circumſtances, had taken it for granted that it was a very true one, had never ſuſpected that himſelf was concern'd in it, 'till the very laſt ſentence of the relation, in which he heard the name of his beloved Harriet.

He was ſilent a few moments; and at the end of that ſhort interval he ſeiz'd his new acquaintance by the arm, and told him angrily he could inform him a great deal about that lady, but that it muſt be in another room.

The gentleman who had taken all this pains to procure himſelf a drubbing, was no other than the facetious and fam'd Mendacio, a choice ſpirit of the firſt rank according to the modern taſte, and the firſt in reputation for that ſpecies of wit which an age ago was famous under the name of *Bite*, and which a modern refiner of terms has now named the *Perſifflage*. If it were neceſſary to add any thing to the character of this firſt wit of the age to diſtinguiſh him to the world, we ſhould add that he is the moſt infamous, impudent, and fearful creature in it.

It is eaſy to conceive the terrors into which the ſevere tone with which Loveill delivered his ſhort anſwer to the long ſtory that had been told him, threw this renowned

nowned gentleman. He had depended wholly upon the ſecurity of a publick room, againſt any little indignation that might chance from ſome unforeſeen accident to ariſe from the ſtory; and had not the leaſt idea how nearly the perſon he was ſet on to relate it to was concerned in it. He told Loveill with a faultering accent, that he knew enough of the lady for that matter already, and that he did not think her reputation good enough to require privacy for any thing that he could have to ſay farther about her.

The miſerable raſcal's unhappy ignorance of the nature of the affair he was engaged in, had given riſe to this laſt inſult on Loveill; and tho' the nature of it plainly enough convinced that provoked lover, that he who gave it was but a tool to ſome body who had not done him the honour to let him into the depth of his buſineſs, yet it did not at all diſarm his reſentment: he rais'd him from his ſeat by the noſe, and was lifting up his hand to cruſh him with a blow, when the depth of the whole ſecret appeared plainly enough to be juſt what he had imagin'd it, by his obſerving *Sir Subtle Peacher* in a corner of the room.

The company of the coffee-houſe were by this time imperfectly acquainted with the

the nature of Mendacio's crime, and two or three of them went up to Loveill, telling him not to expoſe himſelf in this publick manner, for that the gentleman had only *humbug'd* him a little. Loveill ſurlily anſwer'd, that he was a lyar and a villain, that he ſhould cane him ſeverely for it; and added, that he would do any man elſe the ſame favour that took his part.

The eyes of our angry lover were turn'd full upon Sir Subtle when he pronounced this laſt threatning; but that generous patron of the diſtreſs'd Mendacio very good-natur'dly choſe to leave him in the lurch, and not hear any thing of what paſs'd; and that part of the company who had intereſted themſelves at firſt in the quarrel, not chuſing to engage themſelves any farther in it, ſat down, and left the hero to exerciſe his cudgel on the proſtrate offender as long as he thought proper.

Courage and cruelty are incompatible with one another; Loveill no ſooner ſaw the wretched condition of his antagoniſt than he ceaſed his blows, and gently reſuming his hold on that part of his face, by which honour loves leaſt of all to be pull'd, he led him to the door of the room, and after receiving a promiſe from him of never entering it again, nor ever more on any occaſion pronouncing the name

name of the lady he had thus ſcandalouſly ſlandered, gave him his final diſmiſſion with a kick on the breech.

The prudent gentleman received his chaſtiſement with all proper meekneſs of ſpirit; and Loveill returning from the door, went ſtrait up to Sir Subtle, and ſaid to him very ſeverely, "If I could have "ſuppoſed it poſſible, that any body but "you could have put the lye that has diſ-"turb'd me into the mouth of this infamous "ſcoundrel, I ſhould have aſk'd him whoſe "tool he was." He was going on in this tone, when Sir Subtle roſe up from his ſeat, and told him, "Mr. Loveill, don't "ſuppoſe becauſe I avoid a quarrel that I "am afraid of one; let this reſt here, and "meet me to-morrow where you will."

Loveill, who in all his gallantries had never got into a duel before, was a little diſconcerted at this challenge. The impetuoſity of his temper would have been much better ſatisfy'd with the giving the knight the ſame chaſtiſement that he had before beſtowed upon Mendacio; and he was vexed at the accident which he ſaw unavoidably diſappointed him.

He took Sir Subtle to a corner of the room, and ſaid to him, "This is a ſecond "time you have meanly and ſcandalouſly "attempted to injure me in regard to a lady "whom

" whom you have no claim to, but whom
" I am ſeriouſly intereſted in. I had deter-
" mined you a double portion of the chaſ-
" tiſement I gave your tool before your
" face. I own you offer me a more ſatiſ-
" factory and equal revenge; but how am
" I to believe you'll keep your word, when
" I know you to be a villain?—You who
" have this moment uſed your friend thus
" infamouſly, who have drawn a man who
" confided in you into this ſcrape, by giving
" him a ſtory to tell which you knew, but
" took care he ſhould not know the con-
" ſequences of; you who could be this
" treacherous friend, how can I ſuppoſe
" you will be a generous enemy?—Give
" me any ſecurity that you meet me to-
" morrow, and I quit you, elſe———"

Sir Subtle, ſtung to the heart with theſe reproaches, paus'd a moment, and then call'd a perſon to him who ſat in the habit of an officer in an oppoſite box, Captain —, ſaid he, I have promis'd to ſee this gentleman to-morrow—will you aſſure him that I will keep my word. The captain pawn'd his honour for his friend; and Loveill named a place in private to *Sir Subtle*, after which he immediately went out of the room.

If any more than one officer in the ſervice had ever been ſeen to ſcandalize his cloth

cloth ſo far as to ſpeak with, or own the being known to *Sir Subtle Peacher*, we ſhould tell the reader who this worthy captain was. He ſtay'd with *Sir Subtle* till eleven o'clock; and the company in general then leaving the room, they went away together.

The knight was ſcarce well ſeated in a chair, when the fellows who were carrying him were ordered to ſtop, and Loveill addreſſed him in theſe words: "I am confi-"dent that I ought not to truſt you, you "have already betrayed one friend to me, "how can I believe you will ſcruple to do "the ſame by another? Follow me a ſtep "or two, and we'll put it out of diſpute." Loveill had his hand upon his ſword while he ſpoke; and the determinate reſolution with which he expreſſed himſelf, convinc'd the knight there was no alternative but fighting immediately, or being caned. He got out of the chair, and followed his antagoniſt into the next tavern.

Duels are ſo uncommon things in the polite part of the town where this happened, that the maſter of the houſe, who ſhewed them a room, read nothing of their purpoſe in their faces. A waiter was call'd in, and the knight without ſpeaking a ſyllable to Loveill faſtened the door, ordered the fellow to remove the chairs to one corner

ner of the room; and then ſetting him upon a table with a candle in each hand, told him he would cut his throat if he ſpoke a ſyllable, and immediately drew.

Loveill was not behind-hand with the knight in readineſs, but he was much inferior to him in ſkill and compoſure. He had been taught indeed the knowledge of the ſword, but he was out of practice; and paſſion which he could not get the better of diſcompoſed him ſo much as to lay him very open to ſo ſkilful an adverſary.

He received part of a thruſt in his left arm, which if he had not thrown that in the way would have been thro' his body, and before he could recover himſelf from the ſurpriſe of that, another in the ſhoulder; but he returned the laſt by a wound in the ſide, that laid the knight upon the floor, and as both of them imagined, had diſpatched him.

Loveill left the houſe, and getting to the neareſt ſurgeon, told him of the accident, and haſtened him away to ſave if poſſible a life, which he told him beforehand, however, very little deſerved it; leaving the dreſſing of his own hurts, the pain of which was all the miſchief that attended them, to one of the apprentices.

A guard was ſent by five o'clock the next morning both to Loveill's and to the

knight's lodgings to take them under arreſt; but as Loveill did not think proper to return thither till he knew what would become of his antagoniſt; and the ſurgeon had not thought proper to let that gentleman be removed, there was much confuſion and perplexity before it was found out that the miſchief was over, which the friendſhip of the captain had taken this precaution to prevent.

Loveill in the morning received news that the knight was in no danger: he returned very compoſedly to his lodgings; and thus ended this terrible adventure.

CHAP. IX.

A third plot of Sir Subtle's on Miſs Harriet and her lover.—A letter from an unknown friend.—A deep ſcheme of Miſs Harriet's.

LOVEILL had no ſooner left the fair friend of his miſtreſs to enter on this buſtling ſcene of action, than that good-natur'd creature had flown to her, to tell her of his viſit, and relate to her what had paſs'd on the ſubject between them.

She found her diſconſolate and afflicted much beyond what ſhe had been till that time. Every moment of Loveill's abſence added

added freſh torments to what was before too terrible to bear; and it was in vain that all the good ſenſe of Mrs. Wiſewood had been employ'd to comfort her. The revengeful gentleman, who was the cauſe of her uneaſineſs had been ſent for, and was not to be found; and the agonies that every hint of his unkindneſs gave her were ſo great, that Miſs Eaſy found her purpoſe in coming quite obviated; and as ſhe had ſo little encouragement to give her, from the ſucceſs of her own attempts to reconcile them, ſhe choſe to remain ſilent on the ſubject, and not ſo much as to acknowledge the having ſeen him.

While the heroine of our ſtory was in ſo diſconſolate a way, the ſubtle contriver of all the miſchief that had occaſioned it was confined to his bed, and left to revolve at great leiſure the ill ſucceſs of all his ſchemes, and to curſe the ſuperior cunning and diſcernment of his happy rival.

He had perſuaded himſelf, that if it were poſſible for a third attempt to be made at this time, with any proſpect of ſucceſs, his preſent ſituation would add not a little to the probability of its ſucceeding, by its ſcreening him from the ſuſpicion of having any hand in it.

He could not bear to give up the victory to his fortunate enemy; but in the

 rage

rage of his diſappointed vengeance, he threw aſide the remembrance, that the laws of honour requir'd his giving up a cauſe in which he was ſo fairly conquered; and determined ſtill, if any means could render it poſſible, to part this provokingly happy pair. He had fail'd of ſucceſs in two ſo extremely deep-laid ſcenes of treachery, that he now determined to faſhion his laſt attempt on a worn-out device, the familiarity and obviouſneſs of which was all he had to depend upon to render it unſuſpected.

He found means, by one emiſſary or other, to learn the ſtate of the womens hearts very thoroughly, though he could think of no way to inform himſelf of the lovers. He contrived an anonymous letter, which he made his footman tranſcribe; and to take off all ſuſpicions from himſelf, blinded the place where it was written, as well as the character, by ordering the fellow to put it into an office near Hyde-Park-corner.

Miſs Harriet he found had an acquaintance in a ſtreet near this place, who often wrote to her by the penny-poſt, and who always had her letters put in at the very office where this was; ſo that the mark at the back would join with ſome other circumſtances, contrived for that purpoſe to

perſuade her this lady had wrote it, tho' ſhe did not care to be brought into any trouble about the contents of it. The matter of the letter ſuited as well with the character of the lady it was intended that it ſhould be believed to come from, as the place did with her abode. She was an old maid, who had in her younger time refus'd the offer of ſome honourable addreſſes ſhe had received; and had been ſuſpected of ſome criminal ones, which ſhe was perfectly innocent of. She had two or three times in her life had a mind to be marry'd, but her fortune being ſomewhat leſs than it was given out to be, ſhe had found the men all falſe alike, all of them having forſaken her when they knew the truth. From theſe accidents ſhe had acquired a turn of mind that made her very ſuſpicious, extremely cenſorious, and a little envious; and conſequently the moſt likely perſon in the world to be gueſſed at as the author of the letter, in which the abus'd Miſs Harriet was to be told, that all friendſhips were not true—that lovers now-a-days loved to have two ſtrings to their bow—that many a woman of merit had been made the ſtalking-horſe to get at another by—and after a number of other general hints of the like kind, in very plain words, that Loveill was deſperately in love with her

her ſober couſin Miſs Eaſy; that all his addreſſes to herſelf were only meant as the means of getting into that lady's company; and in fine, that it was a ſhame ſhe ſhould be abus'd longer, or receive that ungenerous rival as a friend; that the gentleman now made her fifty viſits for one that he paid to herſelf; and in ſhort, that there was very little of Miſs Eaſy's time, except that which ſhe ſpent in her deceitful viſits to herſelf and her aunt, in which Mr. Loveill was not with her. The letter concluded with inveighing very bitterly againſt the baſeneſs of this unfortunate and innocent girl, who was accus'd of taking all the pains in the world to breed a quarrel that ſhould never be made up between them; and the pretended writer was made to excuſe herſelf from ſigning her name, becauſe ſhe had, as ſhe ſaid, a great friendſhip for both the ladies concerned.

The plot ſucceeded perfectly to the intention of the contriver. The diſconſolate Miſs Harriet no ſooner had read the letter than ſhe gave it to her aunt, and with a mixture of reſentment and concern ſaid many very ſevere things of the fair hypocrite, as ſhe called her, who was accus'd in it. I ſee, ſays ſhe, as plainly where it comes from, as if the name was to it. The very poſt-mark diſcovers it: and I ſhall

eſteem myſelf under the higheſt of obligations to the friendly lady who wrote it, as long as I live.

Mrs. Wiſewood, who had leſs paſſion to cloud her reaſon than her niece, was for ſuſpending her cenſure till farther enquiry; but the eager jealouſy of the young lady anſwered her, that it was ſoon known whether it were truth or falſhood, by ſending to enquire of the woman of the houſe where her couſin lodg'd, whether any ſuch perſon as Mr. Loveill had viſited there.

The aunt, confident of the honeſty and ſincerity of the young lady who was cenſured, and thinking it a certainty that if ever Loveill had viſited her ſhe would have immediately acquainted them with it, told her niece ſhe was glad ſhe had thought of ſo ready a method of diſcovering the truth; deſired her to ſend immediately to enquire; and told her ſhe would refer the whole to the deciſion of the anſwer.

The young lady's woman, a perſon of great ſincerity and honeſty, was properly inſtructed, and diſpatched on this important errand. Mrs. Wiſewood triumph'd greatly in the ſecurity of the innocence of Miſs Eaſy while the ſervant was gone, but her opinion was ſomewhat alter'd when the anſwer was brought back, that the miſtreſs of the houſe had been out all that day, but

but that exactly ſuch a perſon, as was deſcribed, had been there above three hours the evening before; and that ſhe believed he was a lover, for that their diſcourſe together ſhe could obſerve was full of vehement proteſtations; and that ſhe heard him kiſs her as he took his leave.

On enquiring farther into the circumſtances, it appeared evidently, that Miſs Eaſy had come to them immediately as Loveill went away; her never having ſaid a word to them about him, perfectly convinced both the ladies that ſhe was guilty; and the unlucky lover was infinitely more ſeverely cenſur'd than herſelf.

Suſpicion converts every incident into a proof in its own cauſe. Every circumſtance of Miſs Eaſy's behaviour was now ſcan'd over in a new light, and her moſt honeſt admonitions to her couſin, not to ſet her heart more upon Loveill than he deſerved, were conſtru'd into the cunning inveighings of a rival who wanted to get him to herſelf. There was not a ſyllable ſhe had uttered, ſince ſhe had ſeen the face of Mr. Loveill, that was not drawn into the accuſation; nor a word of Loveill's that had been ſpoken while ſhe was preſent, but was now found to be an inſult upon Miſs Harriet's credulity, and an offer of love to her rival before her face:

thus fatally ingenious is jealouſy in finding tortures for itſelf.

It was ſoon a given point with both the ladies, that Loveill was now no longer worth their notice as a lover, nor the couſin as an acquaintance: but this was not all. Miſs Harriet's heart had been too violently in love to ſink calmly into indifference; and ſhe had ſtudied too long under her once beloved maſter, not to have taken up all the faults, as well as all the good qualities of his temper.

His own engines were now turn'd upon him; ſubtlety and revenge equal to his own, and inſpired by the moſt provoking of all circumſtances that a woman could be expoſed to, now conſpired his deſtruction: it was not enough for the avenging Harriet to baniſh him from her heart for ever: ſhe determined to find ſome way of giving him all the pangs from his new miſtreſs's falſhood, that ſhe now felt from his own; and vow'd if any poſſible artifice could effect it, that even his life ſhould pay the forfeit of his treachery.

The aunt who ſaw her diſtracted niece bury'd in thought, and labouring with a paſſion too big for words, broke the melancholy ſilence, and propos'd the ſending for Miſs Eaſy, and upbraiding her in the ſevereſt terms for her baſeneſs and treachery.

chery. The niece haſtily reply'd, "Can "words repay the miſeries ſhe has en- "tail'd on me?—No, Madam, let her "ſuffer all the pangs that I do; and when "her heart is rack'd as mine has been "theſe two days, then let her know, to "aggravate that grief which nothing elſe "could add to, that the perfidy of her "boſom-friend occaſioned it."

The flood of tears that accompanied this pathetick ſpeech were not over, when a rap at the door acquainted the ladies that the ſuſpected perſon was come to wait on them. Miſs Harriet conjur'd her aunt, in the moſt ſolemn manner, to hide the thoughts of her heart from her; to receive her as uſual; and to give no glimpſe of her ſuſpicions. Deceit, continued ſhe, Madam, is only to be repaid with deceit.—She would have ſaid more, but the lady enter'd. Miſs Eaſy's own diſorder gave her no opportunity of diſcovering that of the other ladies, which elſe was on this ſhort notice but very ill diſguiſed. She ſeated herſelf with great diſcompoſure, and introducing her ſtory with abundance of unfeigned tears, aſk'd them "if they had "already heard—or if ſhe was the fatal "meſſenger of the worſt news that ever "had, or ever could reach their ears?"

She no ſooner heard their anſwer, that they knew nothing of what ſhe meant, than ſhe cry'd out, "*Loveill is murder'd*;— "he has fought with the gentleman we were "talking of yeſterday; has kill'd him upon "the ſpot, and is himſelf ſince dead of the "wounds he receiv'd from him."

Miſs Eaſy had naturally expected the moſt violent effects from the paſſion of her couſin at this dreadful news. She was amaz'd beyond deſcription to hear her, on being told that a man whom ſhe had the day before heard her profeſs ſo violent a paſſion for was dead, reply cooly, *then my heart's at reſt*; and to ſee her immediately afterwards ſit down with a forc'd compoſure. If ſhe was aſtoniſh'd beyond meaſure at this deportment of Harriet's, ſhe was ſtill more ſtruck at the aunt's immediately adding, *he has his juſt reward*; *and I hope every one that is as baſe and treacherous as that ſubtle villain was, will periſh in the ſame dreadful manner.*

The ſurprize with which Miſs Eaſy heard theſe ſevere reproaches, on the memory of a man who, but a day before had ſtood ſo high in the eſteem of both the perſons who ſpoke them, added to her own innocence, prevented her obſerving that the concluſion of Mrs. Wiſe-

wood's

wood's ſpeech was addreſs'd in a very emphatical manner to herſelf. The whole matter was now on the point of being explain'd by Miſs Harriet, who obſerv'd, that now the treacherous fellow had met with his deſert, there was no farther occaſion for diſſembling,—when Loveill, to the amazement of every body, enter'd the room. The ſtory of his death, which Miſs Eaſy had heard, was only a miſrepreſentation of the duel; ſuch accidents being always made more and more terrible in the ſeveral hands they paſs through. The news of the knight's ſafety had now made it ſafe for him to appear. He had been impatient of the abſence he had puniſh'd himſelf with; and was come, with all the ardour of a ſincere paſſion, to throw himſelf at Harriet's feet, and accuſe the fooliſh ſtubbornneſs and pride of his heart, of having given him a thouſand tortures.

The ladies ſtarted at his ſight; and Miſs Eaſy relating what ſhe had been inform'd of his death, he gave them the whole ſtory of the duel, not omitting that part of it, which related to his ſeeing Mendacio, both as he went in and came out from his viſit to that Lady.

Miſs Harriet no ſooner ſaw him, than ſhe took up her former reſolution of diſſembling her heart to him. She teſtify'd a

pretended great joy at his eſcape, and kept up the ſpirit of her aſſum'd behaviour too well, to give room to the leaſt ſuſpicion, till they parted.

A thouſand quarrels have prov'd fatal both to love and friendſhip, only for want of being brought to an explanation. Here were the ſeeds of error and confuſion, laid by one deſigning villain, which threaten'd the happieſt ſet of people in the world with the utmoſt miſery.

Had Mrs. Wiſewood ſent to the lady ſhe ſuppos'd the author of the letter, ſhe wou'd have found that ſhe was not ſo, and wou'd have given leſs credit to it; and had the young lady either aſk'd of Loveill or of Miſs Eaſy the account of his viſit to her, ſhe would have been inform'd of her error in ſuſpecting them, and every thing had been happy. An open Behaviour is of the greateſt honour and advantage to human nature; and yet how few have reſolution to practiſe it? Every one of the perſons concern'd in this ſcene ſuffer'd for the want of it, Loveill alone excepted who had nothing to diſcloſe, and who was render'd miſerable only by the want of this frankneſs in the others.

He waited on Miſs Eaſy home. That lady, concern'd and amaz'd as ſhe was at the behaviour of her friends to him, wou'd

wou'd not expoſe their ſecrets by telling him of it; and the ladies were no ſooner left alone, than every article of theſe people's behaviour was wreſted into a proof of the crime they were ſuſpected of. Loveill's owning that he had viſited Miſs Eaſy was a proof of the truth of what appear'd to them the moſt material part of the whole ſtory, and that on which all the reſt in a manner hung: her concern and ſorrow for his ſuppoſed death, and the honeſt joy ſhe ſhew'd in her countenance at his coming in afterwards, were conſtru'd out of friendſhip into paſſion. Every commonly civil word he had ſaid to her was made courtſhip; and double meanings were fancied for a thouſand things, of the moſt indifferent nature in the world, that had paſs'd between them.

When people are once thoroughly engag'd in a wrong opinion, every moment ſtrengthens their obſtinacy in it. Miſs Harriet grew more confirm'd in her ſuſpicions; and in conſequence of them in her avow'd revenge. She did not entruſt her aunt with her whole plot; but only told her, that ſhe would uſe all the traitor's arts againſt himſelf; and wou'd make his new miſtreſs the principal means of her revenge.

The

The finding a new lover for Miſs Eaſy, was one firſt point in this deep-laid ſcheme of Harriet's vengeance; and the blackening the character of Loveill to her relations, and ſetting that of the new lover in a good light, was the only means of bringing this to make them both unhappy.

The relations of this lady were all in eminent employments in the law: and the principal of them, who took the immediate care of her, a ſober, virtuous, and naturally benevolent man, but ſevere in his morals, and unalterable in any opinion he had once taken up.

The ſubtle Harriet took care to have Loveill repreſented to this gentleman, as the moſt baſe and profligate young fellow of the times: and by means of the ſame acquaintance, to repreſent the clerk of an attorney, whoſe maſter's being employ'd in the family had given them occaſions of ſometimes ſeeing him, as one of the ſobereſt young men, and moſt promiſing genius's of the age.

The ſuppoſed treachery of Loveill to Miſs Harriet, was not omitted among the articles of his accuſation; and in conſequence of this, when it was artfully conveyed to this gentleman's ear by another perſon, that one Mr. Loveill, a fine gentleman of the town, courted Miſs Eaſy, he

he ſent for her, and in a very ſevere manner reprimanded her, for receiving the addreſſes of ſo infamous a fellow.

The addreſs of Miſs Harriet had ſo well hid all her plots from both the perſons deſtin'd to be victims to them, that the whole party had continu'd to meet as uſual in ſeeming friendſhip. Miſs Eaſy, aſtoniſhed at what ſhe was charg'd with, told her accuſer, that ſhe was very ſorry to find him ſo wrongly inform'd of the character and intentions of that gentleman; for that he was one of the worthieſt men in the world, and was within a few days of being marry'd to her couſin Harriet.

Every thing that had before been told this gentleman about Loveill now came up in his thoughts; he doubted not but the girl's love had not only blinded her to his vices, but even made her a ſort of party in them; and taking it for granted that ſhe was in a fair way to be marry'd ſo very improperly, as it appear'd to him ſhe wou'd be to Loveill, he took her into his own houſe, and ſuffer'd her to ſee no company but ſuch as he approv'd, nor to receive any letters that were not firſt deliver'd to him.

The ſetting a young lady's friends heartily againſt one match, is the beſt way in the world to make them readily agree to another.

This

This was the principle on which the lady had acted; who now propos'd to herſelf nothing leſs than the deſtruction of Love-ill; her vengeance againſt him was now equal to her former love to him, and ſhe intended to effect it by the arts ſhe had been taught by himſelf. She had no ſooner caus'd the innocent girl to be lock'd up, and made her ready to conſent to any match that ſhou'd be offer'd her, by way of deliverance, than ſhe propos'd her as a wife to the pert young lawyer we have juſt mention'd, as a very agreeable girl, and one who wou'd make his fortune.

The young *Puff*, ſo was the gentleman call'd to whom this friendly offer was made, was one of that ſet of gentlemen, who at coffee-houſes call themſelves *the wits*; at ale-houſes and eating-houſes *the council*; and at play-houſes *the town*. A ſet of beings too contemptible, as well as too notorious, to merit a farther deſcription here.

The length of this gentleman's ſword, which almoſt equall'd that of the twiſted tail of his perriwig; the furious cock of his hat, and the abſence of heels to his ſhoes, had render'd him great among the great of this order. The buſineſs of their profeſſion has long been adjudg'd only a ſecondary employment among theſe gentlemen;

men; the firſt and greateſt being that of the ladies. People of this ſmart turn have always look'd upon themſelves as the prettieſt gentlemen in the world; and have always imagin'd that they have a ſort of right to the prettieſt ladies, and the prettieſt fortunes; and the ſucceſſes of two or three in an age, that have rais'd themſelves to affluence this way are remember'd; while the hundreds that have in the mean time have periſh'd in priſons, never riſe up in the memory of their ſucceſſors, to deter them from the unequal hazard.

Mr. Puff eaſily conceiv'd, that any woman in the world wou'd accept an offer of marriage from him; and was only pauſing on the queſtion, whether it was worth his while to accept the propoſal that was made him or not, when the artful Harriet, running over the numerous advantages that a man in the ſtation of Miſs Eaſy's guardian, cou'd procure for a young fellow whom he had taken into his family, and who deſerved them, the lover became determined in the affirmative, and propos'd the waiting on the lady that afternoon.

New-born love has always wings inſtead of feet. Harriet was extremely pleas'd with the readineſs with which this gallant gentleman accepted her propoſal; but ſhe reſtrained his eagerneſs by telling him, that he ſhou'd be yet farther indebted to her friendſhip; for

for that before he made the attempt, ſhe wou'd inſure the ſucceſs of it, and prepare both the lady and her friends, to receive him in the manner his offer deſerv'd. Fools are of all people the moſt ſuſceptible of flattery. The occaſions this artful lady took, from time to time, of throwing in that bait, devoted the beau ſo entirely to her, that he cou'd ſcarce avoid falſifying his vows to her couſin, before he had made them, by addreſſing herſelf. He parted from her after a long viſit, with thorough ſatisfaction in her propoſals, and a promiſe of waiting on her the next day.

When this gentleman's abſence had given the lady time to recollect, ſhe found that ſhe had more buſineſs on her hands than ſhe had at firſt imagined. Notwithſtanding all theſe friendly offers to the intended lover, it was not her intent that her couſin ſhou'd be marry'd before her: ſhe devoted both that lady herſelf, and her new lover, as tools to her vengeance, not objects for her envy. She found it was in her power to bring on the match ſhe talk'd of as ſoon as ſhe pleas'd; but ſhe determined to get into her own hands alſo the means of breaking it off again as ſoon as ſhe pleas'd, before ſhe carry'd it a ſtep farther. She cunningly enquir'd after the wrong ſide of Mr. Puff's character: when ſhe had found that fertile enough in

oc-

occaſions of this kind, ſhe went on with her firſt plan; and immediately viſiting the guardian of her couſin, propos'd this meritorious young fellow for her.

The old gentleman readily ſwallow'd the bait, promis'd his conſent and his friendſhip to the youth, and determin'd not to give his niece the liberty to refuſe him.

Miſs Eaſy was call'd in: the match was propos'd to her; and as ſhe knew the young fellow, and was ſenſible what great things her guardian would have in his power to do for him, ſhe gave all the conſent to the propoſal, that cou'd be expected from a modeſt, a ſenſible, and good-natur'd girl, willing to get out of a very unpleaſant ſort of confinement. The old gentleman, who knew nothing of the falſity of what he had been told in regard to her affair with Loveill, was pleas'd beyond meaſure with her ready compliance with his intention, and the gallant Mr. Puff was invited to dine with them.

The ſubtle author of all this miſchief was inform'd, from time to time, of the ſucceſs of his anonymous letter, and he glorried not a little in the pains he had ſet the deluded Harriet to take for her own deſtruction; tho' he yet had no idea how far that enrag'd virago wou'd carry her vengeance.

Harriet

Harriet had all this while the artifice to deceive her unſuſpecting lover, by receiving him with a well-diſſembled openneſs of countenance, and covering a ſtill growing vengeance under the maſk of an uncommon affection. She gloried in the ſucceſs of her ſchemes, which had render'd it impoſſible for him to ſee the object of her jealouſy, and frequently brought up her name by way of triumph, conſtruing his unconcernedneſs at what ſhe thought the moſt affecting ſpeeches in the world about it, into a ſuperior art, which ſhe hated him the more for practiſing with ſo much maſterly deceit upon her. She had projected no leſs than the death of the man ſhe had once lov'd ſo tenderly, as the ſacrifice to what ſhe underſtood to be a violated faith, and waited impatiently till her intended executioner was fix'd in the cauſe too far for going back.

She viſited at the guardian's of her couſin from time to time; and ſuffer'd many pangs of envy and remorſe, at the ſwift progreſs of the amour ſhe had ſet on foot between Mr. Puff and that lady, before ſhe wou'd ſuffer herſelf to believe it was fix'd enough to bear the ſuperſtructure ſhe had determin'd to raiſe upon it. She was there at length one evening, when the compliance of the young lady, and the large pro-

promiſes of the guardian, had made Puff capable of doing every thing in the cauſe; and now, determin'd of the ſafety of the plot ſhe had laid, and at the ſame time ſtung to the heart with the provoking ſucceſs of this too forward amour, ſhe reſolved to defer her grand ſcheme no longer.

She received Loveill at his next viſit with a well-diſſembled ſorrow, and as ſoon as he was ſeated told him, with a ſigh, that ſhe was afraid ſhe had ruin'd her couſin. She was a little ſtruck to obſerve a ſenſible change in Loveill's countenance, at the news of ſome ill event in an amour, the ſucceſs of which ſhe had ſo long try'd in vain to provoke him with. Her reaſon had almoſt dictated to her to believe him innocent from it; but paſſion, much too ſtrong for reaſon, ſoon overpower'd it, and enrag'd her yet the more againſt him; for this new ſtroke of diſſembling, as ſhe underſtand it, meant only to deceive her yet more firmly. She ſaid many general things againſt the match; which the unſuſpecting lover anſwered with a ſurprize founded on his remembrance of her having been the only perſon who had brought it about. He hinted this to her, and receiv'd for anſwer; Sir, every body but you may be deceived.—I had heard Mr. Puff's character from his friends, but I have ſince heard

heard from people more diſintereſted about him, that he is an abandon'd rake, a fool, and a profeſs'd gameſter: how this may agree with my poor couſin's expectations, 'tis eaſy to gueſs.

The particulats of this general charge againſt the unhappy beau, made the ſubject of three hours converſation which ſucceeded this; at the end of which Loveill taking his leave, met with the lady who had been the ſubject of their compaſſion, who was now ſuffer'd to viſit her friendly couſin Harriet, juſt getting out of her chair at the door.

He handed her out, and told her with a great deal of earneſtneſs; Dear Bet, I hear you are going to marry very imprudently.—I beg of you to be ſlow in your reſolutions. You deſerve the beſt huſband in the world:—for heaven's ſake don't throw yourſelf away upon the raſcal who now offers himſelf to you.——The poor girl, terrify'd to death at ſo ſerious an admonition, from a man ſhe knew wou'd not give it without reaſon, burſt into tears, and entreated him to go up with her. He excuſed himſelf by pretending an engagement, but told her, her couſin wou'd explain his meaning very fully to her; and repeating his caution to her in a very earneſt manner, took his leave.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

Harriet determines to breaks off her couſin's match — Puff falls under a heavy accuſation — He calls upon Loveill for an explanation.

THE ſubtle and revengeful Harriet had liſtened very attentively from the head of the ſtairs to this ſhort but pathetick dialogue: ſhe triumph'd inwardly at the ſucceſs of her ſchemes, and receiving her aſtoniſhed couſin at the door of her apartment, took her tenderly by the hand, and with well-diſſembled tears told her, My deareſt creature, I have ruin'd you by my unlucky care for you; I know you have advanced too far with Mr. Puff to go back with honour, and conſiſtently with your own repoſe; and yet you are undone for ever if you marry him.

The unhappy Miſs Eaſy ſat down by her, and with a deep ſigh ſaid, I find I am ruin'd, but tell me what is the occaſion of it, and how you and all the world have been impos'd on, as well as myſelf, by this artful man?

Harriet, whoſe very ſoul was alter'd by her paſſions, could now ſee with a malicious

cious joy the pains her deareſt friend felt in the ruin of an amour, the ſucceſs of which, tho' of her own contriving, had gall'd her to the heart; from the remembrance of the ſuppos'd unhappy ſtate of her own. She call'd up all her cunning to her aid; and as ſhe had now for a whole week deceived her lover, it is not wonderful that ſhe eaſily ſucceeded in deceiving an innocent creature of her own ſex, who plac'd an abſolute confidence in her. She repeated every article of Puff's charge to Miſs Eaſy; and as her imagination was very fertile on theſe occaſions, did not fail to add by way of embelliſhing what ſhe told her, that he was a beggar, over head and ears in debt, and already married to his laundreſs.

The unfortunate Miſs Eaſy, who had ſeriouſly thought of ſpending a happy life with the young man, fell into a ſwoon at the laſt article: ſhe was no ſooner recovered, than ſhe entreated to know by what means all this villainy had been diſcover'd. Harriet anſwered with a ſigh, would I could ſay by mine: but you owe it to the generous, honeſt Loveill. He no ſooner heard from me that you was likely to marry this young fellow, than his good wiſhes to you engaged him to examine into his character. What I have told you is

the reſult of that enquiry, as he juſt now delivered it to me; you know the man, and I need not tell you it is not his character, either to deceive others, or to be himſelf deceived.

The confuſion with which the unhappy relation of our heroine heard this ſtory, ſerved but to miniſter new fury and reſolution to her, in her intended ſcheme. Jealouſy, which turns every thing to its own cauſe, whiſpered to her, that all the diſorder ſhe ſaw her in was the effect not of the ſtory ſhe had been told, but of her meeting Loveill at the door; and conſtru'd his refuſing to come up with her into a maſter-ſtroke of deceit, by which he had intended to blind her, tho' at the expence of a very ſenſible pleaſure to himſelf. She ſpent the remainder of the time of this viſit in exaggerating all ſhe had ſaid of Puff; and, in fine, ſent away the deluded lady full of reſentment, which ſhe knew ſhe could not avoid explaining at home, and the conſequence of which ſhe eaſily foreſaw.

Miſs Eaſy no ſooner got home, than ſending for her guardian's wife to her, ſhe told her every thing ſhe had been informed of concerning her new lover. This lady who had lived long enough in the world to have great prudence, and who had been

enough

enough engaged among the ſubtler part of it, to have great ſuſpicion, dry'd up her couſin's tears with great good nature; and told her, that if this was true ſhe might bleſs herſelf for the eſcape; but that if it falſe, as ſhe really ſuſpected it was, (tho' ſhe little ſuſpected the real author of the falſity) it would be eaſily diſproved. "In "things of this importance, niece, continu'd "ſhe, there is no trifling; ſcandal can never "be properly clear'd, while the authors of "it are conceal'd; nor have you any reaſon "to deny your lover a fair opportunity of "clearing himſelf, by telling him not only "what he is accuſed of, but who is his ac-"cuſer: for my part, concluded ſhe, when "I conſider who it is that has ſaid it of him, "I find great reaſon to ſuſpect that it is only "a mean and diſhoneſt trick of a jealous "rival, who deſerves no favour from you."

Miſs Eaſy aſſured her aunt in the moſt ſerious manner, that Loveill was neither mean, diſhoneſt, nor a rival, but a ſincere, diſintereſted friend. There is, continued ſhe, Madam, ſome myſtery in the bottom of all this that I cannot underſtand; but to convince you how diſintereſted a perſon I am willing to make myſelf in it, I beg I may leave the conduct of the whole entirely to yourſelf. The good lady was extremely pleas'd with the candour and

ſincerity

ſincerity of her niece, and promis'd to do her every good office in her power.

She determined to keep the whole ſtory from her huſband till it ſhould be clear'd up; and retiring to her cloſet wrote the following letter, which ſhe ordered to be delivered to Mr. Puff when he came to make his next viſit.

SIR,

YOU have offered yourſelf as a match to a young lady of our family; we have received you as we thought you deſerved: but we are alarmed with a report of you, which is by no means conſiſtent with our former opinion. You are accuſed of being a profligate, and a gameſter, and of a prior marriage to a mean perſon yet living. You will not wonder that your viſits are not received here till you have cleared yourſelf of theſe imputations; and that you may know how to go about this, I am to tell you that your accuſer is Mr. Loveill. We are ſo far prejudiced in your favour as to believe all this to be no more than the malice of a diſcarded rival, and heartily wiſh you may be able to prove it ſo.

I am, Sir,

Brook-ſtreet,
Thurſday morn.

Your very humble ſervant,

* * * * * *

The lover was punctual to his accuſtomed hour in making his viſit; and was familiarly walking into the palour when the footman denied him admittance, and delivered him his lady's letter. He had no ſooner caſt his eye over it, than with a face covered with a glow of fire, he ordered the ſervant to tell his lady he would not preſume to deſire admittance to her, till he brought her a proper anſwer to that letter; and calling a coach, ordered it to ſtop at Miſs Harriet's, and thence to proceed to Mr. Loveill's lodgings.

The ſubtle authoreſs of all this miſchief had expected a viſit of this kind from a man who ſhe knew looked on her as his greateſt friend and beſt confidant. He was eager to tell her the ſtory of his accuſation, but was amazed to find that it had come from her own mouth, and not a little pleaſed to have ſo full a proof of its being Loveill who had ſaid it.

Harriet acted her part with infinite cunning on this occaſion. Her plot was now brought to the criſis: the falſe and ungrateful Loveill, as ſhe ſuppoſed him to be, was deſtined to pay his life for his imaginary perfidy, and this furious lover was the tool who was to be his executioner, as he ſuppoſed in his own cauſe. She gave up the moſt deſerving man in the world without

without remorſe: ſhe urged the execution of her murderous deſign upon the lover with all poſſible eagerneſs and cunning: ſhe exaſperated him to the utmoſt pitch by many additional circumſtances; fir'd him with the remembrance that Loveill was his rival, and that the lady had ſtill but too much tenderneſs for the villain; and urged him to the utmoſt in the heat of his paſſion, adviſing him to give no ear to the ſubtleties of Loveill, nor even to condeſcend to come to an explanation with him.

The lover left her, thoroughly ſpirited up to her purpoſe, and drove furiouſly to Loveill's; he was informed at his lodgings that he was at the King's-arms at dinner, and in the ſame rage and fury he followed him thither.

Mr. Puff, who had intended a viſit to his lady, was at this time dreſſed to the utmoſt advantage; but ſuch is the difference between the real habit of a gentleman, and that of thoſe apes of faſhion, who paſs themſelves off for ſuch in coffee-houſes, that the waiter at this polite houſe, to whom he addreſſed himſelf, took him for nothing better than a French barber's ſervant, or ſome body's valet de chamber, and refuſed to diſturb Mr. Loveill about him, unleſs he would ſend in his name.

The furious Puff at length diſcloſed it; but adding, that Mr. Loveill did not know him by name, the fellow, who had been taught by many a broken head that it was not his buſineſs to diſturb his maſter's cuſtomers on trivial occaſions, waited in ſpite of all his entreaties and threats till he was called in about ſomething elſe, and then told Mr. Loveill that there was a perſon in the next room whoſe name was Puff, who deſired to ſpeak with him. Loveill anſwered, he did not know any thing of him; which indeed was literally true, for the artful Harriet, tho' ſhe had not hid the whole affair of the courtſhip from Loveill, yet had cunningly concealed the young fellow's name. Loveill had given himſelf no farther trouble about his viſitor; but ſomebody of the company, pleaſed with the name Puff, had aſked the waiter, what ſort of perſon it was that owned it; and on his replying, that he ſeemed to be ſome gentleman's gentleman out of place, he laugh'd, and bad him tell him, that it was a very good name, but he did not want one.

The raging lover had now had a full half hour to ſtride about the room in; not all that he could ſay to the drawers, or to their maſter, having been able to prevail with them either to go in with a ſecond meſſage,

meſſage, or to ſuffer him to enter the room himſelf. The remembrance of the reſpect with which he had been uſed to be treated under the name of your honour, by the boys of the gill-houſes and cooks-ſhops at his own end of the town, enraged him ſo violently againſt the inſolence of theſe fellows, that had not he reſerved all his fury for his rival, ſome of them would probably have ſmarted for it; but if he was outrageous at the contempt ſhewn him by theſe people, what were his thoughts when he heard the laughing waiter who had delivered his meſſage, return him the anſwer Loveill had ſent to it, with all the graces of that pertneſs that is peculiar to the ſlaves of tyrants, on occaſions in which they can themſelves be tyrants in their turn! He laid his hand upon his ſword, and in a very threatning tone told the waiter he muſt go in again that moment, and tell Mr. Loveill he was miſtaken in the perſon, and muſt come out that inſtant.

The waiter return'd into the room, and after humbly begging pardon, delivered his meſſage in the modeſteſt terms he could, and Loveill who followed him into the room where Puff was, after thoroughly viewing him, told him, picking his teeth, that he had no occaſion for him; but

as he was a good clean looking fellow, if he would leave his direction with the waiter, and where his character might be had, he would mention him to his acquaintance.

Loveill, who had perfectly fallen in with the waiter in his opinion of Mr. Puff from his appearance, after he had careleſsly ſaid this was walking back again to his company: when the little hero, trembling with rage and vengeance, ſtrutting up to him, and pulling him by the ſleeve, ſaid in a terrible tone, Sir, I want to ſpeak with you—I muſt have ſatisfaction of you before you leave this room. The heroical Mr. Puff was drawing his ſword with theſe words, when Loveill with a look of contempt that is not eaſily deſcribed, ordered the waiter to bring him his ſcabbard. The fellow was no ſooner gone out of the room than the little bravo ſtrutting up to Loveill told him, Sir, you have injured me beyond reparation.—Loveill ſtill buſy'd in picking his teeth, very coolly reply'd, I don't know you—Sir, my name is Puff—I was told ſo before, reply'd Loveill, but I don't know that neither—No, Sir!—No, Sir.—Sir, I have the honour to pay my addreſſes to Miſs Eaſy.—O, reply'd Loveill ſomewhat angrily, I know your character then, though I knew neither your perſon

perſon nor your name; and I have adviſed her very heartily not to marry you.

This led to an explanation between the pretended rivals, in which Puff related all that Miſs Harriet had told him, during the time of a long diſpute between the waiter, who inſiſted upon it that he was ſent for Loveill's ſcabbard, and the company, who were convinced that it muſt be the ſword he wanted; he at length returned with neither; and all the ſatisfaction the vehemence of the lover could obtain, was the being, after ſome difficulties, diſmiſſed without kicking down ſtairs for that time, upon his promiſe of meeting Loveill at Miſs Harriet's apartment the next afternoon.

Puff had promiſed himſelf a very different end of this expedition; but he was ſo amazed at the manner in which Loveill received his charging that lady with having ſaid what was related of her, and ſo terrified with the contempt and inſolence with which he had treated him, and his anger, that he was ſcarce come to himſelf when he arrived at Harriet's lodgings to tell her of it.

CHAP. XI.

A ſtrange cataſtrophe at Mrs. Wiſewood's.—Miſs Harriet behaves very freely to her company.—She is ruſticated for a twelvemonth.

HARRIET no ſooner ſaw this furious gentleman enter the room alone, and in confuſion, than ſhe concluded Loveill dead. She liſtened eagerly for the circumſtances of the ſuppoſed duel; and almoſt expired with anguiſh and confuſion when ſhe heard the ſtory of all that had paſſed between them. She heartily abus'd the lover for departing from her inſtructions, and coming to an explanation with ſo ſubtle an enemy; ſhe told him he had been deſpiſed as he deſerved; and finally diſmiſſed him with the approbrious names of fool and coward a thouſand times repeated, and with the moſt ſolemn threats to ruin him in her couſin's favour.

This lady's anger was not without foundation. She had laid a plan for the deſtroying one whom ſhe thought a treacherous villain, by means of a long ſeries of falſe repreſentations; and it was by no means her buſineſs now to bring matters to an explanation, by ſeeing the people together. This ſhe was determined to prevent, though

though ſhe ſcarce knew how: the lover, who conſidered that his all was at ſtake upon it, as determinately reſolved to bring it about; and indeed took one ſtep in it which was not eaſily obviated, which was the writing to the lady whoſe letter he had received, the account of what he had done, and what he was to do about it.

While Harriet's whole ſtock of invention was at work to prevent this meeting of the two people in her company, ſhe received the following billet from her lover.

Deareſt Harrie!

THE raſcal whoſe hiſtory you gave me yeſterday has called upon me to give an account of myſelf for having told it to you. He has the modeſty to charge you with affirming this of me. I have done myſelf the violence to let him go, on his ſolemn promiſe of meeting me this afternoon at your lodgings: where it will be an additional piece of juſtice to give him, in your preſence, that chaſtiſement, which he who dares but to whiſper an accuſation of your innocence, ſhall not fail to meet with, from

Your moſt devoted

LOVEILL.

I would not have you dread another duel. Theſe are a ſort of people too low to quarrel with. My reſentment ſhall go no farther than the kicking him down ſtairs.

Harriet now ſaw her own diſgrace inevitable. Miſs Eaſy and her aunt had ſent to her while ſhe was reading this, to tell her of Puff's letter; they had added, that they would wait on her at the time appointed for the gentlemens meeting, in order to hear what Loveill could ſay for himſelf; and even her aunt who had been preſent when Puff told the ſtory of their meeting, tho' not when the diſcourſe had paſſed about this gentleman which occaſioned all the diſturbance; and who was yet far from being convinced of Loveill's treachery, was as impatient to ſee this deciſive explanation. Harriet ſaw that ſhe muſt be expoſed, and rendered contemptible either to one of the two parties, or to both. To Loveill alone if ſhe refuſed the meeting, and to all her friends and acquaintance, as well as to Loveill, if ſhe conſented to it. She knew Loveill to be worth this whole number; but ſhe did not know that ſhe was ſure of Loveill, even if ſhe ſacrificed all theſe to him, by denying every article of the charge, though they were one or other of them witneſſes of the truth of every part of it. The ſtory of his courtſhip to Miſs Eaſy ſtuck cloſe by her in all her deliberations; and ſhe thought ſhe plainly foreſaw that the brazening this out, and of conſequence the occaſioning Puff

to

to be diſcarded, only laid the way to her rival ſtill more open to him. It is eaſy to ſee what a woman in her circumſtances ought to do, and what ſhe would do. She took the latter part; and too proud to confeſs that ſhe had done wrong, blinded it to the world by preventing the viſit of the only perſon in it who could explain it. She knew Loveill's diſcernment could not miſs the finding her guilty by this refuſal, let her word it how ſhe pleaſed; and therefore as ſhe knew, that to prevent her ſacrificing her reputation to him, ſhe muſt ſacrifice him to her reputation, ſhe determined to do it boldly, and returned him the following billet.

Mr. Loveill,

I Was ſurprized with a letter from you this morning, threatening to uſe a perſon very ill, whom you have already, I am afraid, been too unjuſt to. I have nothing farther to concern myſelf about in it, than to prevent the rudeneſs you intend of making my lodgings the ſcene of it; and am to tell you that I have other company this afternoon, and ſhall be at home to neither of you.

Harriet Wiſewood.

Loveill

Loveill had not read half the note, before he found what he had never ſuſpected; nor wou'd have believ'd, if the whole world had join'd to tell him it; that Harriet was a baſe and miſchievous diſſembler. To know a perſon unworthy of his thoughts, and to drive her for ever from them, were with him one and the ſame thing. He broke the chains he had been ſo long bound with in an inſtant, and condemned his own blind partiality, that had repreſented her to him as the generous, open, honeſt creature, with whom it were a happineſs to paſs his life. He was almoſt tempted, from his former good opinion of this lady, to think all women falſe; and to lay a new plan of life, in which it might be poſſible to be happy without them.

The company met at the time appointed; and as Harriet had taken care to conceal from every body her having written to Loveill, the hour was hardly a moment paſs'd, when the warmeſt of the ladies began to complain of his backwardneſs. As the minutes roll'd on the company began to triumph; only the beau, who knew very well in how contemptible a light he appear'd to Loveill, took no pride upon the delay, but gueſs'd that he might be aſleep, or waſhing his hands, or about ſome other important buſineſs, at the con-

concluſion of which he wou'd come to them.

The ladies had been very ſevere, and Harriet had even taxed his courage as well as his honeſty, for not meeting his injur'd rival according to an appointment of his own making, when his footman arriv'd at the door with a letter directed not to that lady but to Mrs. Wiſewood; in which he told her, that till her niece was diſpos'd of, ſhe muſt pardon him that he did not viſit her.—That he had once believ'd her every thing that was great and amiable; but that her having deny'd him liberty to meet at her lodgings a perſon whom he had promis'd to chaſtiſe there, for an injury done to her character, convinc'd him that ſhe had no character to vindicate; and that ſhe was in truth that baſe, treacherous, and mean creature, that nothing but the inſignificancy of the perſon who yeſterday had accus'd her of it, had prevented him from murthering, for ſaying ſhe was.

The aunt, who had too rooted an opinion of Loveill's integrity and honour, to let her join eaſily in the ſuſpicions the reſt of this company had of him, had always had her own opinion that he was innocent. This letter clear'd up the whole. She read it to the company: and it being now plain, not only that Harriet had wrote to

Loveill

Loveill that day, but that he had alſo, prior to that, and ſince the affair of the tavern, wrote to her, Mrs. Wiſewood inſiſted upon her producing that letter, and declaring what anſwer ſhe had made to it, on pain of ſuch diſpleaſure as would be very terrible to her.

Harriet, whoſe indignation was now at the higheſt, threw her lover's letter to Mr. Puff. She told him ſhe gave it him, as he was the perſon moſt concern'd in it; and deſir'd, that when he had perus'd it he wou'd read it to the company. The beau had been pretty well mortify'd with this, when ſhe added; "Fools as ye are, "don't pretend to preſcribe rules to me.— "You are to know you have all been only "my tools to execute a vengeance, which, "as you have not had ſenſe or courage "enough to finiſh for me, I have now no "farther uſe for you; and may explain you "to one another.

"That thing of a lover there, is one of "my chuſing for my couſin, not to be her "huſband, for he is in reality the wretch you "have been told; I rais'd him as a rival to "Loveill, to rob that lady of her ungene-"rous conqueſt of a man ſhe knew devoted "before to me; and as an avenger of the "wrongs that perjur'd, that ungenerous "man has done me. He has neither worth "to ſupport the one of theſe characters, nor

"courage

"courage for the other."—She was going on in this violent ſtrain, when her couſin interrupted her, by aſſuring her that ſhe was as much abus'd and miſinform'd as they; and that Loveill had never offer'd the leaſt hint of love to her, nor ſhe believ'd to any woman but herſelf, ſince his engagements with her.

The letter which had occaſion'd all this confuſion was produced, in anſwer to this affirmation; and very opportunely for the explaining of the whole, the lady who was underſtood to have written it came in on a viſit while it was reading.

The unanimous requeſt of the company was, that ſhe would declare whether ſhe really was the writer of that letter, or whether it was a cheat. Her unfeigned ſurprize, and perfect ignorance of the whole ſtory, convinced every body that this was the firſt time ſhe had ſeen it. And now, for the firſt time, the deluded Harriet, tho' much too late, ſuſpected the true author of it, and very juſtly fathered it upon the ſubtle enemy who had occaſion'd her former quarrel with the ſame lover.

If the company thoroughly pity'd Loveill and Miſs Eaſy, they as heartily deteſted her fair couſin. Mr. Puff was diſcarded with that ſort of infamy he deſerved; and Harriet, after bearing the reproaches of all

her acquaintance, as a baſe and miſchievous woman, was baniſh'd into the country for a twelvemonth.

CHAP. XII.

The ſtate of Loveill's heart after his ſeveral diſappointments. He determines upon attacking a new miſtreſs.

LOVEILL, thoroughly mortify'd with his ill fortune in an adventure which he had thought ſecure of ſucceſs, beyond the utmoſt power of ſubtlety or accident, ſat himſelf down in a very ſerious mood, to reflect upon the tranſactions of his laſt ſeven or eight months.

He recollected very well, that the plan he had ſet out with, was the allowing a year, or at leaſt as much of it as ſhould be neceſſary, to the finding a proper perſon for a wife. He found two thirds of that period elapſed, and three times as much of his fortune ſpent in the time, as he had allotted to it: and yet he found himſelf not at all nearer the end he was aiming at, than he was the day he ſet out. All that he had profited hitherto by his reſearches was, that he had learn'd more of mankind than a college life cou'd have taught him: and in conſequence of this knowledge, he found that

that there were more knaves and fools in the world than he had ſuppos'd there were; and that the women in general were not quite ſo good creatures as the poets deſcribe them to be.

As much out of humour as he was however with his fortune in love-affairs, he cou'd not but recollect, that it was by his own determination that he had not marry'd almoſt any one of the people he had courted; that he had been well receiv'd by them all, from the inconſtant lady Juliet to the revengeful Harriet; that it was their faults, and not his, that had broken the acquaintance; and that he had all the reaſon in the world to believe he might yet, if he pleas'd, make it up with any one of them.

He revolved the cataſtrophe of every one of his amours ſeriouſly over in his mind, and found that upon the whole he had only diſcover'd, that women were women, and not angels; and that the inſolence, the love of revenge, and the ſeveral other foibles of his own temper, had been the only real bars to his happineſs with them.

It came then to this final reſult with him, that all the women he had hitherto known, and all that he cou'd hereafter know, had, and wou'd have faults; but that

that his own paſſions, which were often faulty enough too, had been the only reaſon of his quarrelling ſo outragiouſly with them; and that it now was brought to this alternative, that he muſt diſcard either thoſe paſſions, or his plan of marrying. Prudence told him that of two things in his choice, that was to be renounc'd which was likely to be moſt troubleſome to him; but it did not prove eaſy to him to determine which of the two before him this was. The wife-ſcheme had indeed his heart, tho' not his reaſon, abſolutely on its ſide; and in fine the reſult was, that where two things ſeem'd in themſelves about equal, the addition of the inclination, tho' it had properly no right in ſo ſerious a diſpute, turn'd the ſcale.

Loveill once more reſolv'd to marry; and with that view he reſolv'd firſt to curb the violence of thoſe paſſions that had hitherto prevented it, and to make even his beloved revenge ſubſervient to his now more belov'd reaſon.

This reſolution was paſs'd in form; but he cou'd not bring himſelf to humble his pride ſo far as to make up the quarrel with any of his former miſtreſſes, and the whole buſineſs lay where to find a new one.

There were ſtill a number of gay people about town, whom he had been too buſy to

to attack, tho' he had been ſenſible enough of their charms, as they had continually met his eye at public places. The buſineſs now was to ſelect from among theſe the moſt amiable; and the way to do this juſtly was to converſe with them all. Heartily did our hero now wiſh for the means he had uſed at Bath, of examining all the beauties of the place before he declar'd for either; but his perſon was too well known in all public places, and to all the people who frequented them, to let any diſguiſe now hide either himſelf or his purpoſe; and he cou'd for this time get no farther than the reſolution of knowing ſomething of the ſeveral objects of his choice, without being able to determine in what manner he ſhou'd arrive at that knowledge.

CHAP. XIII.

Loveill goes to a jubilee maſquerade.—Attacks an old acquaintance.—He finds means of a very ſevere revenge upon Sir Subtle Peacher.

OUR hero was idling away an evening at the favourite ſcene of his amuſements, Ranelagh, when he ſaw the notice of a jubilee maſquerade to be held at that place, at two or three days diſtance, poſted up

up againſt the doors of the room. He congratulated himſelf upon the accident, and very devoutly paid his thanks to chance, which had thrown into his way the means of doing what had appear'd to his thoughts before as impracticable as it was neceſſary. All that he wanted was an opportunity of ſounding the tempers and inclinations of the people he was to chuſe a wife from among, unknown; and a maſquerade was a means of doing this favourable beyond his utmoſt expectations; as he ſhou'd not only be conceal'd at it, but ſhou'd meet with the freeſt acceſs imaginable to every body he cou'd wiſh to ſpeak with.

He determined immediately to be there, and to make it a night of buſineſs; and was very happy in the thought, that he might be able to make his attack in banter upon whatever lady he ſhould pitch upon, after he had ſingled her out; and by this means to get over the moſt troubleſome part of an honourable amour, which is the firſt ceremony of declaring it, by doing this in a privileg'd place, where every thing under the degree of abſolute rudeneſs is permitted; and where he ſhou'd have an opportunity of ſaying a great deal more for himſelf, in a ſort of jeſt and raillery, than it was poſſible for him to do in earneſt at a more ſerious meeting.

It

It was ſoon concluded, that the moſt common and general dreſs that cou'd be choſen was the propereſt for the firſt part of the buſineſs, the mixing unobſerved among a crowd, and examining the ſeveral merits of people unſuſpected; but the maſterly cunning of our accompliſh'd ſchemer could not reſt here. He determin'd the attacking every body he had in his eye with a love addreſs, as the proper buſineſs of the place, and the beſt of all means of ſounding the depth of a woman's underſtanding: but as he intended to be particular with the perſon he ſhould fix upon, and to begin an abſolute amour from that inſtant, he did not think it convenient to be expoſed, while he was about this, by fifty other women, whom he might have before addreſſed, and who might ſet his pretenſions to the lady he was in earneſt about upon a very bad footing, by telling her that he had before proſtituted the ſame fine things to them all.

Where a man has liberty of hiding his face, the reſt of his outſide is ſo eaſily chang'd, that it is not difficult to paſs upon the world for two different people. This was the ſcheme our gallant pitch'd upon, to ſave himſelf from the trouble of this ſort of miſchievous impertinence; and when the day came, he dreſs'd himſelf in

a very elegant and light dreſs, in the character of a huntſman, and cover'd this with a black domino, and a hat ornamented with a mix'd blue and red feather. This was enough to particularize him among the domino's, and by its abſence, when he choſe to appear in his other character, to ſcreen him from all ſuſpicion of being the ſame perſon.

Thus equipp'd he enter'd the room when pretty full, and mix'd in a moment among the gay crowd that he found there. The elegance of the place in its new ornaments; the gaiety of the diſpoſition he ſaw every body in, and the effect of a few glaſſes of champaign which he had taken at his entering, to prepare him for the ſpirit of the place, gave a new turn to his thoughts. The ſcheme he had enter'd with was forgot, and all the ſober buſineſs deſtin'd for the evening, turn'd into a reſolution of making it a night of the moſt joyous gaiety. The double dreſs he had put on with a very ſerious intent, promis'd him infinitely more advantages in his preſent ſcheme; and there was ſcarce a woman he ſaw worth notice, that he had not in a quarter of an hour form'd ſome deſign upon.

He was tripping acroſs the room in extreme ſpirits to a lady that he had deſtin'd

as

as the object of his firſt addreſſes, when he perceiv'd a perſon ſtrutting very majeſtically by him, and ſquinting a thouſand ways at once, as if upon the ſame ſort of ſcheme with himſelf. He had not examin'd this maſk five minutes, before he diſcover'd him, by unexceptionable marks, to be his old enemy Sir Subtle Peacher; and the ſight of this precious raſcal bringing a thouſand circumſtances into his thoughts, it immediately occur'd to him, that in his laſt affair with Harriet, that lady had evidently been abus'd and impos'd upon by ſome body; and that there was indeed no one who cou'd have been the author of all that miſchief but himſelf.

The remembrance of his parting with that girl would, at any other time, have made him call out the perſon who had wrong'd him a ſecond time, to give him a ſecond ſatisfaction of the ſame kind for it; but he was now in a mood only for merry miſchief, and contented himſelf with deſtining this heroe to be the ſacrifice only to the worſt buſineſs he ſhould bring upon himſelf that night by his gallantries.

The motley feather in our hero's hat had not fail'd of doing the buſineſs for which it was worn. Every body's eyes were upon it; and while the wearer was deliberating among a ſet of gay people

that

that ſurrounded him, which was moſt worthy to be firſt attack'd, the very woman to whom he was making up ſo ſwiftly, when the ill-ſtarr'd fox we have juſt named croſs'd his way, now danced up to him, and with all the pertneſs ſuch a place inſpires, aſk'd him, if his brain was of as many colours as the pretty ornament it was embelliſh'd with.

Loveill had not expected to be attack'd firſt, but he was not diſpleaſed with it. He ſeiz'd the bold beauty round the waiſt, and telling her he had fewer colours and leſs lightneſs in his feather, than ſhe had in her heart and inclinations, he led her out of the crowd, and convinced her that he was perfectly acquainted with her ſecrets, by telling her fifty reproachful ſtories, but without names; which, as they ſuited every coquette in the world, cou'd not miſs of being applicable to the lady they were ſpoken to, and deſcrib'd to her, among the number of her lovers, all the fops and fools of his acquaintance. Loveill did not know that the lady he was addreſſing all this to was the celebrated American Brunette, who has prattled herſelf into the reputation of the perteſt, prettieſt, livelieſt little thing about town. But the whole race of fops are ſo perfectly like one another, in their intellects as well as in their dreſs,

dreſs, manner, and modeſty, that his deſcriptions ſuited the people ſhe applied them to, as well as thoſe he meant them for; and the lady ſtuck by him till he was tired of her, under the opinion that he could never have known ſo much of her, unleſs he was one of her moſt intimate acquaintance.

If a coquet were a creature that could be made any uſe of, this lady would have been moſt entirely at Loveill's ſervice; but he knew enough of the women of her character to aſpire to nothing farther than the employing her in her own way; and when he had admired all the ſmart things ſhe had ſaid and heard in company for the laſt fortnight, ſettled himſelf in the thorough knowledge of every body who made any figure in the place by her means, and learn'd from her mouth the neweſt ſcandal of every one of her acquaintance, he ſlipp'd her off at the open-mouth'd beau Stare, whoſe limber back diſtinguiſhed him by its contortions as he ſidled by them; and heartily congratulated himſelf on his liberty.

To be free, and to be engaged again to a man of Loveill's turn in a maſquerade, are but the buſineſs of the two ſucceeding moments. He had not time to deliberate to whom of all the gay company he ſaw before him he ſhould next devote himſelf,

when his eyes were taken with the fluttering habit of a female, who ſkimmed along the matting in a flowered robe of pink and ſilver, with an air that ſpoke her of ſome conſequence. The adventurer tripped after her, and ſeizing her by the arm, turned her round, with the familiarity of an intimate, and ſaid, where the devil have you hid yourſelf? I have been looking after you this half hour. The conſummate impudence with which our gallant pronounced this, convinced the lady that he was an acquaintance; and her great talent being the finding out people on theſe occaſions, ſhe employed ſome minutes in vain in attempting him, and was at length ſo determined in favour of an opinion that he was a certain captain very happy in her good opinion, that ſhe complimented him exceſſively on the maſterly art he had of altering his voice, and even returned the addreſſes of the right captain, who entered the room after the wrong one had joined her, with ſo much inſolence in his firſt attempt to ſpeak to her, that it was an hour before he ventured to call up the ſame ſort of reſentment in her by his ſecond addreſſes.

Loveill was in full ſecurity, and happy in all that familiarity which was his aſtoniſhed rival's due; and as in a maſquerade the dreſs, the eyes, the ſhape, the hair, and the wit,

wit, are all that can be admired in a woman, he had ſo little ſuſpicion that nature had not made every thing elſe about this lady of a piece with theſe; and ſo little idea, that he had called up a beau of his acquaintance to take one of the handſomeſt women of the age, who was this lady's companion, out of the way, and leave him to himſelf with one of the plaineſt, that in the midſt of his raptures at her wit and ſpirit, he had certainly made the utmoſt uſe of the intimacy his imaginary perſon gave him, had not a woman of ſome figure, whom he had obſerved from the beginning of the evening to eye him in all his actions with a look of great curioſity and ſeverity, now come up to him; and out of patience at the raptures ſhe ſaw him in with his new miſtreſs, told him with a mixture of grief and ſeverity, but in a feigned voice—I always believed you to be an inconſtant rake, now I am convinced of it.

Loveill did not know what to make of a reproof of this kind from a perſon he knew nothing of: he put her by however, and walked away with his former miſtreſs, juſt turning his head over his ſhoulder to tell her I'm engaged now, but I'll talk to you by and by.—The lady anſwered with ſome vehemence, Now, Sir, or never while

you live—you don't know what you are refuſing.—All this was extremely unintelligible to Loveill; but determined to ſacrifice nothing without knowing what it was, eſpecially without knowing who it was that he ſacrificed it to, he with an eaſy ſmile turned to the lady he had with him, and told her, Well then, Madam, it is you that I muſt talk with preſently, ſince this lady will run away with me juſt now, whether I will or no. You ſee, continued he to the ſtranger, what you rob me of, take care you make it up to me. The ſtranger reply'd with great eagerneſs, I will, if you will let me—a ſigh prevented her ſpeaking more, and a look ſhe accompanied that ſilent teſtimony of her uneaſineſs with, touched him ſo ſenſibly, that the captain, whom the imagination of the lady he had hitherto been with had made him perſonate, paſſing by at that inſtant, he led her up to that gentleman with great gallantry, and delivered her to him with many civil things about her charms, and with an aſſurance that he had pleaded his cauſe with her to the utmoſt, under the pretence of his own.

The lady was thunderſtruck to find herſelf delivered up by a ſtranger to the perſon ſhe ſuppoſed ſhe had been ſo long converſing with: ſhe whiſpered Loveill at parting,

parting, Sir, you are a gentleman—you have played a maſterly piece of cunning upon me—but make no ill uſe of any thing I may have dropped in a ſuppoſed confidence to that gentleman. Be aſſured that I took you for him; and that the greateſt civility you can now pay me, will be never to ſee me, know me, or think of me again.

The miſtaken lady burſt from Loveill at the laſt ſentence, and was out of ſight in an inſtant: he turned round to the ſtranger, and was going to addreſs her in the ſpirit of the place, when ſhe ſeized him by the hand, and tenderly preſſing it, told him, Mr. Loveill, I want no maſquerade converſation: only, if it is not too great a reſtraint upon your levity, remain with me the reſt of the evening; or if you leave me, don't be particular to every flirting thing you meet here.

Loveill ſtared upon his new acquaintance, examined her ſhape from head to foot; and then told her, dear lady, this is no place to be grave in—You have my name, but upon my honour I don't know you; nor has any woman at this time a right to that ſort of reſtraint upon my conduct, which you are pleaſed to expect from me. —The lady only anſwered him with a

ſigh—He would fain have ſhook off an acquaintance ſo very improper for the place, and for the humour he found himſelf in; but he found a ſecret charm in every thing ſhe ſaid, and for two hours indulged a converſation very foreign indeed to that uſual on ſuch occaſions, but which by the tenderneſs and delicacy of ſentiment it was kept up with on the lady's part, charmed him in a very uncommon manner.

He courted her in earneſt, acknowledged a paſſion of the nobleſt kind for her, founded not on her face, but on her ſoul, and preſſed her extremely to explain herſelf and her behaviour to him. The lady anſwered him, Nothing Mr. Loveill is more certain than that I love you: I dare own it—and that there is nothing I wiſh ſo much as that you could honeſtly return that paſſion. Yet there is nothing, not your addreſſing every idle thing this idle place affords before my face, that can grieve me, can torment me more, or ſet you lower in my eſteem, than what you are now doing. Nothing can give me agonies equal to your telling me you love me; and nothing can add to thoſe agonies more than my believing you to be ſincere and honeſt in telling me ſo.—Loveill replied to her, Madam, you are pleas'd to make yourſelf a ſort of paradox that I don't pretend to underſtand: but be what

you

you will, and mean what you will, you are every thing that I can think worth admiring.

The converſation that paſſed for an hour afterwards between theſe two accompliſhed maſques was kept up with equal ſpirit, and with equal myſtery on the lady's ſide; till concluding that ſhe had fixed him ſufficiently to venture to diſcloſe herſelf, ſhe aſked him, if he would do her the honour to dance with her? On his conſenting, ſhe ſlipped on a ring, out of her pocket, upon her little finger, and ſtood up in the circle for a minuet.

It was not till this accident that Loveill had any idea, that the perſon he had been engaged in ſo remarkable a converſation with was an old acquaintance: he had conceived a very uncommon tenderneſs and regard for the lady, though he knew not how to underſtand many parts of her behaviour: but what was his aſtoniſhment on touching her hand in the courſe of the dance, to perceive on her finger a ring of ſome value, of too remarkable a kind for him to be miſtaken in, and which he had ſome time before given to Miſs Harriet Wiſewood. His hand dropped from its hold on the inſtant: he abruptly left the lady in the middle of the minuet, and fell into a moſt extravagant fit of court-

ſhip to a woman of the town, who ſtood among the circle of the ſpectators.

Harriet was not without friends in the place, but the prudent conſideration that he who dared do this certainly would dare to do more, kept every body from meddling; and the lady found ſhe had nobody but herſelf to reſent the moſt publick indignity that ever was done a woman.

The extreme familiarity with which every body had ſeen this gentleman and lady converſing together for ſome hours before, made it not look over particular in her to go up to him after this ſtrange behaviour. Fury, indignation, and ſorrow mixed themſelves in her eye, and her hands trembled while ſhe ſaid to him, "Do you know, monſter of perfidy and "ingratitude, that I have hazarded charac-"ter, fortune, expectations, nay almoſt "life itſelf, to make a journey hither with "the ſole view of ſeeing you? of pour-"ing out my heart, my ſoul before you; "and how have you received me? I own "I have been to blame: you are in the "right — you always are ſo: but what "has been my crime, but the being de-"ceived? Is it ſo great a condeſcenſion "to pardon in a woman the terrible guilt "of not having been infallible? You know the means that have been uſed to impoſe

" impoſe on me: and you know to what " cauſe it has been owing that I could not " bear to think you any thing but what " you had before appeared to me."—

The lady had now talked herſelf out of breath, without coming near the end of her diſcourſe; when Loveill ſetting her down on a bench, told her, that as he thought ſhe had a right to demand his anſwer to what ſhe had ſaid, and what ſhe was about to ſay, he ſhould give it to her. " To ſay that I have loved you, ſays he, is " to ſay infinitely too little; that I have " adored you more than woman ever was " adored before, is evident. I own it, and " I am ſenſible that I was in the right in it. " You had merit to command it: that " merit ſtill ſubſiſts in you: but there ſub- " ſiſt with it a thouſand unſuſpected miſ- " chiefs, the leaſt of which muſt be the " bane of any love that's worth your having. " —You err in accuſing me of reſenting " your having been deceived; but ſurely " there was a baſeneſs, treachery, nay " cruelty in the effects of that deceit, that " are ten times as horrible as their own " nature makes them, when you remem- " ber againſt whom they were directed. " Of this be aſſured, a perſon of my na- " ture, as unbounded in reſentment at in- " dignities, as in gratitude for benefits,

" cannot but deteſt and contemn the wo-
" man who has injured him; not in pro-
" portion to that injury, but to the for-
" mer confidence repoſed in her. You
" ſee I am honeſt, though angry, and
" though hurt by it to the ſoul: you have
" but one ſtep to take: I'll put you into
" your coach, and you may get back be-
" fore you are ſuſpected: as for the reſt,
" I will do you the utmoſt favour an ho-
" neſt temper, unjuſtly and ungratefully in-
" jured, can do—I will forget I ever knew
" you."

Harriet's heart was too full to reply. She ſaw her fate: and knew the advice came from the friend, though not the lover. She left the place with bitter imprecations on herſelf if ſhe ever hereafter remembered the name of Loveill, but with that deteſtation and horror which this laſt act had given juſt occaſion to.

Loveill returned to the room, and after drowning the remembrance of this *mal à propos* meeting with a large draught of Burgundy, gazed round him for ſome object that might afford him a more ſuitable entertainment. He had not time to chuſe, when his thoughts were all fixed on a gay creature that fluttered by him, equipped with all the luxuriancy of expence and ornament that a good taſte could lay upon her.

her. The height. the ſhape, the manner and deportment, ſoon convinced him that this was the goddeſs of the age, the moſt adorable and adored *lady Shew*. Loveill had long eyed this delicate creature in publick at a diſtance, but he had never dared truſt himſelf ſo far as to addreſs her. He very well knew the ſtrength of her charms, and the ungoverned eagerneſs of his own temper; and had ſatisfied himſelf, that nothing but keeping at a due diſtance could prevent the effects of theſe two powerful agents from making the poſſeſſors of them either very good friends, or very bitter enemies. His own judgment had always ſeen in the look of this lady ſo much of that dignity, which true modeſty and an untainted virtue give to every woman who poſſeſſes them, in the midſt of the gayeſt ſallies that a chearful temper, joyous with youth and high proſperity, led her into, that his heart pronounced her not only innocent, but ſuperior to all arts that could attempt to make her otherwiſe. He had on this conſideration envied the happy huſband, who monopolized ſo much of the charms of a whole ſex; but had always given it againſt himſelf whenever a wild fancy had put it into his thoughts, that he could be the inſtrument of robbing him of any part of her.

Merit

Merit of every kind has always its attendant ſhare of envy, and that fully proportioned to its own excellence: lady Shew is therefore as much the moſt envy'd as the moſt adorable of women. Malice is the eldeſt born of envy, and ever walks arm in arm with its meagre parent, who loſes almoſt her very eſſence if this baleful companion exerts not her influence in a juſt proportion with her. Lady Shew is envied; and to be envied in this honeſt age is alſo to be ſlandered. Fifty people who had heard Loveill drink her health, had told him ſtories that agreed little with his diſtant thoughts of her: he had however paid his own judgment the compliment of ſuppoſing them all in the wrong, and had always preſerved an invariable opinion of the impoſſibility of a thing, that however diſhoneſt, would otherwiſe have appeared very agreeable to him. He knew however the general opinion of the world on this ſubject enough to turn it to his own advantage; and as he had laid it down as an unalterable rule, that people who are worſt of all themſelves, never fail of harbouring the worſt opinion in the world of others, he plan'd out a ſcheme of merry miſchief by means of this lady, that he doubted not would revenge his new quarrel with Sir Subtle; who having been once beaten

beaten by him in the common forms, could no more be properly made the ſubject of that ſort of reſentment.

Tho' Loveill's diverſion and revenge were eager to be indulged in this miſchief, he very prudently conſidered that he had buſineſs as well as theſe to mind. He had ſtill his old office of ſeeking a miſtreſs upon his hands; and as he always made pleaſure give way to buſineſs, he determined this for his firſt attempt, and the lady, whom he was to play upon the virtuous knight, for the ſecond.

He kept his eyes from gazing on lady Shew, that he might be able to think ſome body elſe tolerable: a thouſand pretenſions to the agreeable attack'd his eyes in vain, till he found every thing that they aimed at imitating, in its native garb in the blooming lady *Kitty Paſtora*.

A modeſty and ſweetneſs of countenance, which alone might have rendered almoſt any woman amiable, joined in this happy fair their aſſiſtant forces to thoſe of an elegant perſon, a delicate turn, and eyes whoſe eaſy indolence eclipſed the laughing peepers of the gay Flavia's, or the ſparkling radience of the ſuppoſed unequalled Cynthia's. Loveill was amazed that he had not met with ſo eminent a figure before, till by accident he heard ſomebody addreſs her under the title

of lady Kitty, and wonder that ſhe came in ſo late.

A perſon's name and character are almoſt all that a man wants to know at a maſquerade. Loveill was fairly let in by this accident, and he waited only to read a little more of her meaning in her eyes, to make his addreſſes to her. He watched her narrowly, and obſerv'd the company ſhe avoided, and thoſe ſhe join'd with: he ſaw the beaus and choiceſt ſpirits among the former, and every ſober perſon of ſenſe in the place among the latter. He no ſooner ſaw her turn, than he addreſs'd himſelf to her with all the familiarity of an intimate, and all the pertneſs of a beau, who imagines himſelf to be a wit. "For heaven's ſake, "my dear Lady Kitty, how cou'd you "have the cruelty to keep the ball thus long "from opening? Don't you know that "there is no day without the ſun, tho' it "ſhou'd ſtrike twelve o' clock; nor any "ſpring in April if we have not the prim-"roſes?"

Lady Kitty, whoſe good ſenſe abominated flattery, even when moſt diſguis'd, was out of patience with the ſtupidity and impertinence of this worn out fuſtian. Loveill ſaw her contempt of him in her eyes; he rejoiced in it; he heightened it to the utmoſt; and as (tho' it was impoſſible for her to gueſs ſo much) it was his ſole

buſineſs

buſineſs and intent at preſent to court himſelf as much as he poſſibly cou'd into her ill opinion, he contriv'd to make himſelf more and more odious and deſpicable to her every minute, by keeping up the nauſeous pertneſs of the coxcomb; and perſwading her, whether ſhe wou'd or no, that dreſs and ſpirit were the only things for which a woman of her taſte cou'd like a man.

Lady Kitty, from this gentleman's firſt attack, had taken it for granted that he was ſome very intimate friend, entertaining himſelf with rallying her contrary taſte. She had in this opinion hitherto anſwered him with a ſmiling ſeverity, and endeavoured only to return his falſe wit with falſe reaſons. At length, as ſhe ſaw no end of her perſecution, ſhe grew in earneſt, and told him, "Sir, I believe I have hi-
"therto been miſtaken in you.——I am
"now convinced you are ſome ſtranger,
"who have accidentally pick'd up my
"name, and are ſo very ignorant of my
"ſentiments, that you have been all this
"while attempting to recommend yourſelf
"by what I took to be a ſort of raillery,
"which (I beg your pardon if I am miſta-
"ken) I now fancy you are not capable
"of. That I may be rid of you, Sir, con-
"tinued ſhe, be pleas'd to know my
"mind, tho' this is the laſt place where a
"woman

" woman wou'd declare it ſeriouſly on any " other occaſion. There is nothing in hu- " man ſhape that I think ſo contemptible " as the man of dreſs, who has only that " to recommend him: nothing the human " mind can fall into ſo low, ſo odiouſly diſ- " taſteful, as that ſort of impertinence which " you take for wit; and nothing that could " ſo unalterably prejudice me againſt a " man, as the familiar manner in which " you have choſen to make an acquain- " tance with me. To me there is more " pleaſure in one ſimple unadorned truth, " than in all the flouriſhes of falſe rhetoric, " that your whole race can embelliſh your " nonſenſe with; more charms in the un- " affected humility of an untaught ſhep- " herd, than in all the labour'd confidence " of your manner; and more pleaſure in " an hour's ſenſible and undeſigning con- " verſation, than in an age of all the ſtudied " phraſe with which you have been court- " ing me. I hope you find you are miſta- " ken.—You ſee I am very free with you, " but it is becauſe I am very heartily tir'd " of you; and I flatter myſelf, that after " this trouble I have been at to explain " myſelf to you, you will do me the favour " to rid me of your company."

Loveill's buſineſs was now compleatly done for the firſt attempt with this lady. He told her, he was ſorry to find he had miſtaken

miſtaken her ſo far as to ſuppoſe ſhe had ſome taſte; and turning upon his heel addreſs'd himſelf immediately to Lady Shew, who chanced to be at that inſtant paſſing by him. His buſineſs was to be very quick in this ſcene, that he might haſten to his ſecond attack on Lady Kitty, while the remembrance of the firſt was yet warm with her. He puſh'd his fortune with Lady Shew to the utmoſt; told her he had been toaſting her ſo deep, that he had at laſt got courage to tell her ſo: boaſted of having been her ſlave I know not how many years; and run himſelf out of breath with a ſet of compliments and double entendres, that he knew cou'd not but be the moſt diſagreeable things that ever had been ſaid to her. Her indignation gave him new courage; her contempt only increas'd the occaſions of it; and in fine, he had not convers'd with her five minutes, whether ſhe wou'd or no, when with all the familiarity of a debauchee to a common creature of the ſtreets, he preſs'd her to drink champain with him, tête à tête, in one of the rooms of the houſe.

He avoided the natural indignation of a woman of the firſt virtue and faſhion in the kingdom on ſuch an inſult, by not waiting her anſwer; and tripping it up to his old enemy Sir Subtle, who had not the leaſt

leaſt ſuſpicion of who he was, but had watch'd with an envious eye his familiarity with Lady Shew, and whoſe unmerited bad opinion of her, he knew would lead him to believe the moſt abſurd things in the world about her: whiſpering him in a feign'd voice he told him, Sir Subtle, I ſee you have diſcover'd me; and I know you'll blow me to the huſband. I have but one thing for it. I don't care to ſacrifice ſuch an acquaintance as Lady Shew, whatever it coſts me to preſerve her. Don't tell of me, and take the appointment yourſelf; I'll leave the place. I hir'd my dreſs at the door; you may take it there and paſs for me; only beckon her to follow you, and go into the third room in the houſe on the left, that's the place. But be upon honour, Sir Subtle; don't let her diſcover that it is not me.

Sir Subtle hugg'd him by the fiſt; Dear devil, ſays he, don't ſuſpect me: all rogues are true to one another: get about your buſineſs.

Loveill laughing with the expected ſcene, ſtepp'd out of the door, and throwing off his domino and hat, put on a cap that he had in his pocket, and enter'd at another paſſage in the character of the huntſman, after giving orders to the waiter, to whom he deliver'd his hat and gown, to ſay he was gone,

gone, and to demand a guinea of Sir Subtle, who wou'd immediately call for them.

Loveill mingled among the crowd about one of the tables in his new garb, and watched the event of his plot. Miſchief well laid ſeldom fails to exceed the intention even of the contriver. Loveill had intended nothing farther from this plot, than the being a witneſs to the knight's receiving the ſort of rebuff himſelf had deſerved from that lady, and had avoided by his flight. But this was little to the juſtice that lay in wait for that well-nam'd miſcreant.

The people of quality are all acquainted with one another; and Lady Kitty, who had obſerved the freedom with which her impudent lover addreſſed himſelf to Lady Shew, as ſoon as ſhe had diſcarded him, only waited for his turning his back to come to an explanation with his new miſtreſs about him. She no ſooner ſaw him out of the room, than ſhe flew to Lady Shew, and aſk'd her, for heav'ns ſake, my dear, who is that inſolent fellow? Inſolent do you call him, returns the lady? the devil never equipp'd ſuch an impudent advocate before.

Loveill with great ſatisfaction read in the eyes of the two ladies the reſentment that accompany'd every ſentence as they related

related to each other the ſeveral circumſtances of his courtſhip. Nothing remain'd but to know how to be reveng'd: Lady Kitty propos'd the cauſing the guard to take him into cuſtody; but the ſuperior reſentment of her companion cou'd not reſt there. That, ſays ſhe, dear Lady Kitty, is a puniſhment for ſmaller offences; a cudgell or a horſe-pond is the only adequate revenge for theſe. In ſhort, I'll deliver him over to this gentleman, who has not only more wit than we, to contrive a puniſhment for him, but more right than any body to inflict it.

It was Lord Shew, who came up to his lady at that inſtant, to tell her of the civil things that ſomebody had been ſaying of her dreſs. Civil things, retorted the lady; we have had ſuch things ſaid to us as you little imagine. She went on, and related every particular of the ſtory; and made even worſe than the reality, every thing that the inventor had made as bad as his wit cou'd make them.

Lord Shew did not know whether to be more merry or more provok'd at the incident: he beckon'd an intimate acquaintance to ſhare in the vengeance he intended; and inſiſted upon his lady's going out with her lover the next time he aſk'd her, promiſing to be cloſe at her heels, to prevent any new inſult.

The

The plan was ſcarce laid, when Sir Subtle enter'd the room in his new habit, the mottled feather eaſily diſtinguiſh'd him, and the lady had no ſooner fixed her eyes upon him, than he gave her the familiar ſignal, and ſhe follow'd him.

Lord Shew had ſcarce believ'd the ſtory till he ſaw this unqueſtionable proof of it. He took his friend by the arm, and follow'd cloſe after them. The lover was too eager, and too elated with his happineſs, to look behind him, and in a few moments he led her into the deſtin'd room.

Sir Subtle was ſo tranſported with the ſucceſs of this lucky adventure, as he thought it, that he did not perceive he was watch'd, till Lord Shew, who had follow'd them in, opening a door at the other end of the room, let out his lady, and deſir'd her to ſtep back and bring Lady Kitty to be witneſs of her intrigue; and he ſaw himſelf lock'd up with two tall fellows, one of which he now perceiv'd to be Lord Shew, inſtead of a tête à tête with his lady. He fell upon his knees, and continu'd in that poſture, while a waiter enter'd on Lord Shew's calling, and receiv'd orders to bring thither half a dozen of his comrades, and a large blanket. The apparatus was ready, and one of the fellows had orders to take off the gentleman's maſk, juſt as the ladies enter'd the room.

The

The knight wou'd have ſaid ſomething, but he was not heard. The waiters ſpread him carefully on the blanket, and when the company were tir'd of ſeeing him mount to the cieling, they left the room, with orders to them to give him half a dozen more toſſes, and then to cool him in the octagon pond below the terrace.

The ladies were returning full of laugh into the room, when the new figure of the huntſman appear'd before them, and with a world of modeſty and humility ſingled out Lady Kitty, and congratulated her on the revenge which ſhe had taken on one of the moſt worthleſs fellows on the earth. Lady Shew told Loveill he had very early intelligence, but not exactly juſt; for that the revenge was rather hers than that lady's.

Loveill pretended to teſtify a world of ſurprize and pleaſure on hearing this; and taking off his maſk ſaid to Lady Kitty; "I doubly congratulate you, Madam, on "this piece of news. There was a thing "I was indeed very eager to explain to "you, but this takes away half the terror "of it. I flatter myſelf, continued he, "that I have the honour to be known to "you; and I judg'd it neceſſary to make "myſelf ſo, by laying aſide the diſguiſe of "a maſk, before I cou'd expect you to give "that credit to what I have to tell you, "that it requires of you."

The

The ladies both perfectly recollected Loveill's face, tho' they did not know his name; and the contraſt of the diſtance, reſpect, and decency with which he ſpoke to them, when they remember'd the impudent familiar, with whoſe puniſhment they had juſt been entertaining themſelves, gave him a thouſand graces, that he cou'd not have taken the advantage of on any other occaſion. They were both extremely pleas'd with him; but Lady Kitty, who thought ſhe ſaw very plainly, that the intent of his addreſſing himſelf to them, was to do her ſome act of friendſhip, was eager to have him explain himſelf.

Loveill continued to tell her, that there was a creature of Sir Subtle's in the place, who was to have been the confidant of his intrigue, and was to have been introduced to her afterwards by Lady Shew's means, to have made a fourth of the imaginary party. That this wretch, mean, infamous, and capable of any thing, had watched the whole ſcene, had found that his patron was betray'd, had vow'd revenge upon her ladyſhip, whom he ſuppoſed the occaſion of it, and had even engag'd himſelf to murder her in the crowd as ſhe went to her chair.

The only alleviation of this terrible accuſation of Loveill's, in which, indeed there was not a ſyllable of truth, was, that it

was

was charg'd upon nobody. He ſaw the effect in the lady's face who was threaten'd, and he added, "Madam, I cou'd not but "think it my duty to inform your lady-"ſhip of this. If this lady has a place in "her coach, you are ſafe under the pro-"tection of her lord; and my ſervice can "be of no value to you. If otherwiſe, I "know the man, and if you will give me "leave to be near you, will engage my "life to guard you from him."

The generous friendſhip of Loveill gained him the eſteem and good opinion of the ladies in a very uncommon manner. Lady Kitty thought ſhe ow'd no leſs than her life to him; and on their joining Lord Shew and his friend, and telling them the ſtory, Loveill, who told them he was confident he cou'd ſingle out the man, was by the joint requeſt of every one of the company detain'd among them. It was eaſy for our gallant not to pick out a man who did not exiſt; and at the concluſion it was as eaſy to ſuppoſe, that a villain who had ſuch an intent, had ſkulk'd about in corners; and in fine had made off undiſcovered, as he ſaw the object of his revenge too well guarded for him to attempt any thing againſt her.

The ſtory ſerv'd Loveill's purpoſe excellently. It appeared plainly by his knowing the perſon, and every circumſtance of the

the adventure, that he had heard it very early; and as they did not ſuppoſe the man of the mottled feather to be two perſons, they judg'd he cou'd only know it, as he told them he did, from the mouth of the very villain who was to have murder'd Lady Kitty.

This imaginary incident gave him a moſt favourable introduction to that lady; and as he had before been acquainted from her own mouth with what was her taſte for the agreeable in men, he had full inſtructions for the employing his wit to the beſt advantage, in what are the beſt of all lights to ſhew wit in, candour and ſimplicity; he did not omit to profit of the occaſion. He courted her without ſeeming to intend it, or to know that he did it; and in fine, he had the honour to be ſet down at his lodgings out of their coach, and very earneſtly invited to viſit them.

CHAP. XIV.

Loveill ſeeks Lady Kitty a long time in vain.——Is ſtruck with a Lady he meets with in Lord Shew's company.——A new love-ſtory.

LOVEILL had got the name of Lady Kitty confirm'd to him as really belonging to his new miſtreſs, not only by

every body that knew her in the rooms, but by the company in the coach as they return'd home; and it was certain enough that people of this ſtamp would not carry on a fiction, had it been ſuch, after the occaſion of it was over. There are ſo few Lady Kitty's among the belles of the preſent age, that he quickly learnt the reſt of her name; and heard on all hands that ſhe was extremely handſome, and was, into the bargain, one of the beſt and worthieſt women of the age. He had not yet, however ſeen her face. He viſited Lord Shew: he was extremely well received, and grew even intimate there: but ſtill no lady Kitty appeared. He puſh'd his fortune at length ſo far as to aſk Lady Shew if ſhe had ſeen her; but he had the mortification to hear for anſwer, that they were not much acquainted.

Four days paſs'd in this unhappy abſence; on the fifth, a Ranelagh breakfaſt call'd all the polite people of the town together. Our hero never miſs'd an occaſion of making one in ſuch parties, and had now indeed double reaſon not to do it, as he had hopes of meeting his new flame there. He look'd over the room in vain; or more properly he look'd over the room without knowing what he look'd for. He had come ſo late, that Lord and Lady Shew

Shew were ſeated in one of the boxes at breakfaſt, before he enter'd the room, with only one perſon more in company. He paid his compliments to them, but deny'd himſelf the honour of breakfaſting with 'em, though preſs'd to do it, telling Lady Shew, with a very ſincere ſigh, he muſt beg to be pardon'd, for that he was ſeeking thro' the world the lady he had ſeen at the maſquerade; and was not without hopes that he might find her among the company at this place. The lady laugh'd, and Lord Shew bid him go, for that he gave him up for loſt.

Loveill look'd till he was tir'd: he aſk'd every body he knew, if they had ſeen Lady Kitty there, every body anſwered in the negative, till as he was idling over his breakfaſt, and aſking the fat waiter who attended him the ſame queſtion, rather out of the love of ſpeaking the name, than from any hopes of ſucceeding in the enquiry, the fellow told him, that he had ſeen her chariot at the door very early in the morning. Loveill aſk'd him eagerly, if he knew the lady if he ſaw her: the anſwer was, yes; and this cunning emiſſary was ſent, under the diſguiſe of his employment, by the help of wiping a cup, or clearing a table, to ſearch every box, as well as every party he met

walking, with a promiſe of a guinea reward if he found her. Intereſt urged him to be in very good earneſt in the ſearch, and to thruſt his head into every company where he dared to do ſo, without danger of its being broke for it. Loveill watched the ſagacious blood-hound in the chace, and ſaw him continue it with equal vigour and addreſs till he had three times taken the complete circle of the room, and then dart out at one of the doors. The lover doubted not but he had intelligence, and flattered himſelf with hopes of immediately ſeeing the lady he was ſo earneſt in his ſearch after, till he ſaw the fellow enter the room again, and approach him with a dejected look. He told him there was ſome very ſtrange perplexity in the caſe. That lady Kitty was abſolutely not to be ſeen; and yet that he was not wrong about the chariot, for that it ſtood there ſtill; and he had enquired among the ſervants, and found that they brought no body but herſelf in it, and that ſhe joined ſome company out of another chariot, as they went in at the door.

The lover was ſufficiently vexed at the diſappointment of his hopes. He conſidered however, that as the lady came in her chariot, and it waited for her, ſhe certainly would go away in it too, and that it was

was but watching that vehicle, when the performance was over, and he ſhould certainly at leaſt get a ſight of her. He ordered his emiſſary to go out and ſhew him the chariot, that he might not miſtake it; and giving him a crown, though he had not ſucceeded, he returned to the room. He had now given up all hopes of finding his lady till the company broke up, and in conſequence had joined the firſt party he met.

The muſick was about half over by this time, and Loveill was dangling among a ſet of as idle people as himſelf, and anſwering their diſcourſe, without attending to it, when a waiter touched him by the ſleeve, and told him ſome company in a certain box deſired to ſpeak with him. His heart danced within him at the words, he doubted not but it was a generous invitation from lady Kitty, who might eaſily know him, as he had taken off his maſk while he attended her, tho' her face having been covered all the time till they parted, he had not had any opportunity of knowing her again. He was puzzling himſelf for the means of diſtinguiſhing her from the reſt of her company, for he eaſily conceived ſhe had not ſent for him alone; and was recollecting with great exactneſs the colour of her eyes and hair, when he arrived at the box

he was called to; and to his confuſion and diſappointment found it to be no other than that of lord Shew.

He was out of countenance at his miſtake, and did not at firſt perceive that there was ſomething more than appeared, in his being called thither. The ſubject of the maſquerade was talked over, with a great many hints and laughs, which he loſt entirely, as he was fixed in admiration of the young lady who was with them; and who begging pardon for the ignorance of a perſon who was not there, aſked of him a thouſand queſtions of no conſequence about the people that were.

Loveill was of a temper that repreſented every thing female to him as agreeable, provided it was not ſhocking; but there required none of this complaiſance to engage him to like the lady he was now talking with: ſhe was of a fine ſhape and ſtature, and had one of the beſt faces in the world, which was rendered doubly charming by a ſweetneſs and modeſty that would have recommended one of the worſt to any man's eſteem. The lover found himſelf going: he became conſcious of the fickleneſs of his own heart, and with a ſigh was muttering to himſelf, *bye lady Kitty*, when lord Shew, thrown off his guard by the oddity of a figure that paſſed by, and unwilling

that

that any body ſhould miſs ſharing the pleaſure it gave him, called out haſtily, Mr. Loveill, lady Kitty, ſee ——

He might have talked and pointed on till doomſday, before Loveill would have attended to him. The myſtery was now all cleared up to him in a more intereſting affair: he ſtood motionleſs, ſpeechleſs with rapture and admiration; and after ſome moments burſt forth into an exclamation, good God! where was the neceſſity of giving that face to the thouſand other charms I admired the other night: he would have continued in the ſame ſtrain, but the lady interrupted him, by telling him, "Sir, if you have ſeen any thing of "me, you know that flattery is not the way "to pleaſe me. I have great obligations to "you, and ſhall always remember them; "but to prevent miſunderſtandings, it is beſt "I tell you now, that all the return my "frozen heart is capable of, is a diſintereſted "friendſhip. If you can confine thoſe de-"ſires of an acquaintance, which lord Shew "tells me you expreſs with regard to me, "to theſe bounds, you have a right to expect "it of me, and I am not afraid to add, that "I can take a pleaſure in it; but if you "think of any thing farther, 'tis better never "to engage in an acquaintance that muſt be "broke off with diſtaſte. 'Tis better to con-

" tinue indifferent, rather than commence " enemies." Loveill could not but ſecretly reproach the frozen heart, as it acknowledged itſelf, that delivered this, tho' he was charmed beyond meaſure with ſuch a ſuperiority of underſtanding as he ſaw the lady poſſeſſed. He thanked her in the warmeſt manner for the generous offer ſhe made him; accepted it with the utmoſt eagerneſs, and added, " It would be an ill " compliment, Madam, both to you and " myſelf to ſay, that I ſhall never wiſh to ad- " vance beyond the rigid bounds you have " fixed to our friendſhip: but this I can, " and will engage myſelf to, that you " ſhall never be acquainted with any wiſh " of mine that may be diſagreeable to " you."

Lady Shew burſt out into a loud laugh at this ſober agreement for a platonick love-ſcene, and deſired it might be remembered, that lord Shew and herſelf had been the brideman and bridemaid, if ſhe might uſe the phraſe, at this new-faſhioned ſolemnity: ſhe concluded in a whiſper in her friend's ear, which the lover plainly enough read as the prophecy, that the rigid rules ſhe had laid down would be but of ſhort duration. Loveill, who found the way to make himſelf agreeable every where, grew extremely a favourite with

the family he was now among; he dined with them, ſaw lady Kitty home in the evening, and retired to his lodgings ſufficiently ſatisfied with the advances he had made to the charming creature, who now eclips'd every thing in his remembrance.

Loveill was one of thoſe happy men to whom whatever is preſent is beſt. Among the variety of fine women whom his heart had attached itſelf to in this grand ramble, there was not indeed any one but deſerved admiration; but there was not any one to whom, during the love fit, he did not give that admiration in preference to all the reſt. Lady Kitty ſtood eminently in this light at preſent. He had enquired into her fortune, and found it rather too much for his expectations; but that's a fault a man eaſily reconciles himſelf to: in ſhort, he was thoroughly tired with the diſappointments he had hitherto met with in his ſearch after a wife, and determined at all events to end it here.

He recollected among the ladies he had hitherto courted, many whom he might have expected great happineſs with; and found his own unforgiving temper had been the only reaſon why he had not married them: he came to a reſolution that all women have faults, and therefore, that if he refuſed marrying every woman in

whom he found any, he muſt never marry at all; and this being over-throwing his whole ſcheme, he determined to bend the whole artillery of his artifice to the turning the friendſhip lady Kitty profeſſed for him into love, which appeared no difficult taſk; and reſolved not to part with her for any fault of hers, nor provoke her to part with him by any of his own.

He now looked upon the buſineſs of his ſearch as over, and himſelf as married. He viſited lady Kitty continually: ſhe was acquainted with his acquaintance; ſhe lov'd publick places as well as he did; and, in ſhort, they were ſeen every where together, and every body, but the lady herſelf, were of the ſame opinion with Loveill, that they were very ſure to be married. The lover, from the hour of his reſolution in favour of this lady, took every ſtep to win her over to his purpoſe. She was too ſuſpicious not to diſcover his aim, but ſhe was too good-natured not to be pleaſed with it; in ſhort, he won upon her daily, and before their acquaintance was a month old, the lady's greateſt uneaſineſs was, that he did not explain himſelf to her.

The world had ſeen them now long together, and wiſhed, but in vain, to part them: they ſeemed to hold every thing in contempt but

but one another; and if they joined another party in publick, it was rather becauſe it appeared too ſingular to be much together, as it were alone, than from any proſpect of being better pleaſed with the converſation. They had been one evening at Vaux-hall, when coming to take water, a lady that was then juſt putting off, ſtarted up, not without endangering the overſetting of the boat, and looking attentively on Loveill, ordered the waterman to put to ſhore: ſhe ſtepped haſtily out, and coming cloſe up to him under one of the lamps, hid her own face under her hand, while ſhe attentively viewed both his and lady Kitty's. She was no ſooner aſſured of the truth of what ſhe ſuſpected, than ſhe ſtepped back into her own boat, and bad the waterman get as quick as poſſible to the place he was ordered to, and take care that no other boat followed them in.

The occaſion of this lady's particular curioſity was a myſtery to our lover and his lady, but the fact was plain: lady Kitty, who had now got thro' much of the ſtrictneſs of her platonick notions, bantered Loveill with a half-jeſt half-earneſt jealouſy, and begged he would have the compaſſion to viſit the lady that had honoured him with ſo particular a notice, before he ſlept.

Loveill

Loveill proteſted, in great ſincerity, his utter ignorance of the perſon, and promiſed to continue in it.

There is nothing ſpurs on a tardy love-contract ſo much as a little jealouſy. Lady Kitty grew uneaſy about any other perſon's intereſting herſelf in her lover; and was angry with herſelf for having kept at ſuch a diſtance hitherto, that he might break off without imputation, if a new object offered. A converſation much more intereſting than any that had before paſſed between theſe lovers, was the ſequel of theſe apprehenſions of the lady; and they both thought matrimony extremely near when they parted at her door, with a promiſe of meeting in the Mall the next morning.

Loveill remained unalterable in his reſolution of not quarrelling about the lady's faults, if he ſhould find ſhe had any; and went to bed well ſatisfied, that the world would, in a few days, ſend their congratulations to lady Kitty Loveill.

The lover was in the Park an hour before the time. He dangled about with any body he found till he was tired of walking, and was ſeated on the bench that borders on the ſide walk by the Mall, when he ſaw the object of all his wiſhes enter at the Stable-yard gate: he was flying

ing to her, when he firſt obſerved that ſhe had dropped her uſual companion, and had taken up a ſtranger: but what was his aſtoniſhment to find, as they approached nearer, that this ſtranger was no other than lady Juliet Scheme.

The blood ran cold in his veins at the ſight of her: he immediately recollected the adventure at the water-ſide: he now knew the lady who had examined his and his companion's face in that ſtrict manner could be no other than lady Juliet; and as he had great reaſon to ſuſpect, from the tranſactions recorded in the firſt volume of theſe memoirs, that he had no very friendly advocate in this incenſed rival, he no ſooner concluded, from her entering the Park with lady Kitty, that they had breakfaſted together, and had opportunity for a tête-à-tête of an hour or two, than he gave himſelf up for loſt with that lady; and was half mad to ſee a match, which he had thought ſo certain, ſacrificed in a more provoking manner than any of the former; not by his leaving the lady, but by the lady's leaving him.

His conjectures were not ill-grounded: lady Juliet had not taken all that pains to know who her revengeful lover had got with him, in vain. She had viſited lady Kitty at her toilet, and had given her ſuch

a character of Loveill as might be expected from an injured woman, enraged beyond meaſure at his inſults, and at the ſame time outrageous at the thought of his being in a way to marry another perſon. She knew enough of the wrong ſide of Loveill's character to found accuſations on, that no women in her ſenſes would ever get over, in regard to the man ſhe thought of as a huſband: ſhe told her he was the moſt treacherous, the moſt inconſtant, and the moſt cruel of men; that he had within a few months ſworn the ſame oaths, and pay'd the ſame adoration to no leſs than ſeventeen of her intimate acquaintance; that he had contrived to make every one of them believe he was in earneſt, and return his feigned paſſion with a real one; that he not only had abandoned every one of them for the next face he ſaw that had any thing agreeable in it, but had contrived to quarrel with them all publickly; and not one of them but had ſuffered in her reputation by it. She expatiated largely on the late ſtory of the poor Miſs Harriet Wiſewood; and finally concluded with her own; frankly acknowledging her own paſſion for the inconſtant brute, and telling the ſeveral advantageous matches ſhe had declined on his account; and gave,

the

the whole ſtory of his expoſing, and leaving her at the Lincom-Spa.

As lady Juliet had infinite wit and ſpirit, and with it a ſubtlety that few women arrive at, without paying much dearer for it than ſhe had done, ſhe had contrived to tell only the worſt part of every one of theſe ſtories; to give his reſentments their full colour, without touching upon the provocations of them; and, in fine, to relate every thing in ſuch a manner as to make it affect the lady's particular circumſtance to whom ſhe addreſſed it. The conſequence was, that Loveill from this moment appeared to lady Kitty the moſt infamous, and moſt to be dreaded, of all mankind. He ſaw his doom in her eyes, before ſhe approached him. He knew a woman who has once broke thro' a loveſcheme, is never worth getting into it again: he gave up the affair as irrecoverably loſt; and tho' he had reſolved againſt reſentment at any thing that lady did, becauſe it might prevent his marriage, he no ſooner ſaw all hopes of that event over, than his darling paſſion pleaded hard to come into practice.

Twenty times over he reſolved upon contriving ſome horrible plot that ſhould have expoſed ladyKitty to all her acquaintance; but ſhe no ſooner approached him, than

than he found ſhe was the only woman in the world he could not injure, even tho' provoked to it by her neglect: he ſoothed the rigour of his firſt reſolves; and as he had found by his free acquaintance with her, that the great pride of her heart was the being adored, tho' ſhe would give no body leave to tell her ſo; and that nothing could ſit ſo terribly heavy upon her as the being indifferent to any body, he determined only to mortify this pride by a mock contempt; and to leave to her own thoughts the puniſhment of what he would, in any body elſe, have reſented in a very different manner.

To plan a thing, and to bring it into execution, are with people of Loveill's rapid temper, one and the ſame thing. He ſeized upon two ladies who were their common acquaintance, as they paſſed by; got them to ſit down by him, by telling them a cock-and-a-bull ſtory invented upon the occaſion; and as lady Kitty and her new friend paſſed by, he whiſpered one of them to lay hold of her, and they ſhould hear the ſequel. While the lady, who obeyed his commands, talked to lady Kitty of indifferent things, Loveill gave lady Juliet very accuſing glances, but taking care that his diſregard of the other ſhould be very plain, the other lady of the party ſoon aſked him

him the queſtion, for the ſake of bringing on of which he had calculated all this ſcene, which was, dear Sir, how comes it that you and lady Kitty, who uſed to be ſo extremely intimate, and every where together, don't join company, but ſeem quite ſtrangers. *Intimate! Madam*, replied Loveill with an indolent ſmile! no: we never cared three halfpence for one another. We both loved the ſame places, and ſo we often met, and when we had no body elſe to join, we often joined one another. We were ſauntering Jack and idle Joan. I did as well for the lady to chat with as any body elſe, and ſhe as well as any body elſe, or any body elſe as well as her for me: we met by accident, and we parted without ceremony; and it did not ſignify two-pence whether we had ever met, or whether we had ever parted at all. You ſtare, Madam, continued he, but depend upon it, ninety-nine in a hundred of the dear friendſhips you ſee at this time before you, are juſt of the ſame ſtamp.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

Loveill's amour with lady Kitty is very quickly ſucceeded by another.—Character of a renowned pimp.

AN explanation had certainly followed on this inſolent contempt of one of the fineſt women of the age, either from the provoked lady herſelf, or from lady Juliet, whoſe old wrongs roſe up in her remembrance, and would have ſeized with eagerneſs upon any ſubject of revenge on the ſame injurer; but a ſtrange fate that purſued Loveill, and tho' it every where prevented his concluding his love-ſcenes in the honourable manner he intended, yet while it broke off the old acquaintances, never left his heart a moment vacant from new ones, now threw into his way as he was delivering the laſt ſentence of his taunting explanation, the charming Jenny Loveleſs. The new air of lady Kitty's face had obliterated ſo many of her charms, that Jenny ſeemed to the prejudiced eye of Loveill infinitely her ſuperior. He ſtarted as ſhe paſſed by him; and riſing on the inſtant to follow her, he not only diſappointed the revengeful objects of his contempt of all that their witty malice had deviſed

deviſed to ſay to him, but added infinitely to that contempt by leaving them without ceremony for a creature, whom they held in much greater real contempt, than he had pretended for them.

Lady Juliet's reſentment dictated to her to repay his indifference with an equal diſregard, and turn the other way rather than mortify themſelves with being witneſſes of what they knew would give him as much pleaſure in the uneaſineſs they felt at it, as in the ſatisfaction himſelf received from it. Lady Kitty was not ſo much a miſtreſs of herſelf, or ſo well acquainted either with Loveill, or with the world. She bent her eyes after him as he purſued, with all the eagerneſs of a lover, a creature ſcarce worth owning as a common miſtreſs; and tho' ſhe was determined beyond alteration not to have any thing to do with him herſelf, perhaps ſome terrible conflict would have enſued in her heart on ſeeing him ſo readily, without even coming to an explanation, devote himſelf to another; but that this cataſtrophe was luckily for her prevented.

Loveill had not got up with the new object of his admiration, when a perſon in the habit of a clergyman accoſted him, and whether he would or no joined company with him. This officious gentleman was

no

no other than the very eminent *Mr. Cureleſs*, who full of the terrors of a ſtarving ſituation in the country, had determined to neglect praying, and to live upon the only profitable employment he ſaw going forward in London.

Every body knows by ſight and name at leaſt, a perſon who has made ſo gay a figure about town, as Loveill had now done for ſome time. As every man's affairs are a ſecret in ſo populous a place till ſome very bad conduct expoſes them, this gentleman's generoſity had obtained him the character of a man of conſiderable fortune: and as there are few eſtates without livings upon them, the doctor had no ſooner obſerved this new patron fixed in an affair in which he might be of uſe to him, than he applied faſt to his weak ſide, his paſſions; and plan'd out nothing leſs than the fatteſt benefice in his gift, as a reward to the promoting his amour.

After the common chat of ceremony, when the ſubjects of the day, the air, the wind, the duſt, and the reſt were exhauſted, and Loveill ſaw he could not be rid of this civil leech, little imagining the real intent of his joining him, he determined to make him at leaſt ſo far uſeful to him as to learn if he knew it, the lady's name and hiſtory from him.

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The doctor was ſo out of patience at being kept thus long from the buſineſs he had concerted, that his roſy lips were half open to ſay, Mr. Loveill, you ſeem to take great notice of that lady; when the lover, in conſequence of his new reſolution, ſaved the honour of his function by ſpeaking firſt, and aſking him, Doctor Cureleſs, can you tell me who that charming creature before us is? Charming creature do you call her, replies the doctor, on this diſtant ſight of her only: what would you ſay of her if you knew all her charms? Loveill in raptures that he had met with, inſtead of the impertinent companion he thought of, ſo excellent a fellow for his purpoſe, anſwered him with ſome eagerneſs. Then, doctor, you have experience. No, upon my honour and office, replied the prieſt with great gravity and ſolemnity: but I have heard her ſpoken of with ſuch raptures, by one of the beſt judges of a woman, that the preſent or perhaps any age has produced, that I may venture to ſpeak with ſome degree of confidence about it.

Loveill was the readieſt man in the world at entering into the characters of the people he converſed with: he ſaw on the inſtant the full ſcope of the man he had the happineſs to be now in company with, and

and addreſſing with all the familiarity of a man who had employed him fifty times, ſaid, doctor, I find the lady is not uncomeatable. You know her, and can introduce me; let us make up to her.

The doctor told him he was not wholly wrong in his conjectures, but that there were difficulties in the buſineſs which he was not aware of. In fine, concluded he, you are a gentleman, and a man of honour. Don't be uneaſy about loſing ſight of her for this time. I know where to find her: happy adventures never are begun too haſtily: if you are enclined to dine at the caſtle over a bottle of the beſt claret in England, I'll let you into the whole of the buſineſs.

Loveill gladly accepted the offer, promiſed this new friend every thing he could aſk of him in return, and gave him as good a dinner as the houſe could produce. The third bottle had ripened the doctor's imagination for attempting any thing, when he told his friend he ſhould ſee the lady when he pleaſed; and to inſtruct him in his conduct to her, he gave him a ſhort hiſtory of her in the following words.

Jenny Loveleſs you are to know, Sir, was about three years ago the celebrated retailer of golden pippins to the city beaus of the gallery: ſhe had ſome months main-

maintain'd this pre-eminence, when a good-natur'd young gentleman of Cheapſide, who had ſecreted ten or a dozen ſhillings of the retail money of the ſhop in a Saturday's hurry, to make a figure with the next day at ſome hedge-alehouſe in the country, ſaw this blooming beauty in her employment, as he dropp'd in at the half-price, to ſee a piece of a play and a funny entertainment. He fell deſperately in love with her; and thinking the ſum of of money he had purloin'd, an inexhauſtible ſtore for expence and pleaſure, on his telling her he had money enough, and wou'd ſpend it all upon her, he was conducted to a houſe of entertainment, where the firſt bowl cut ſo deep into his caſh, that he did not think proper to pay for any of the ſucceeding ones till morning.

It is no uncommon thing for people to enter theſe ſort of houſes without enough to pay their expences. The young gentleman the next morning was diſcover'd to be in this ſituation: he underwent the common diſcipline of the houſe on theſe occaſions; and after leaving his hat and buckles, and whatever elſe was valuable about him, was kick'd out of doors by the porter.

It far'd much otherwiſe with the blooming Jenny. The ſagacious lady of the

brothel ſaw her a charming creature: ſhe entertained her at breakfaſt at her own table; took her into pay in the houſe; dreſſed her in the caſt birth-day ſuit of ſome woman of quality, and made ſome hundreds of her market of her.

The unlucky Jenny had but a ſad ſhare of this profit. After a two months life of as much happineſs as one continu'd fit of drunkenneſs for that whole time cou'd give her, ſhe was kept as a uſeleſs ſervant, upon very bad terms, for two more; and then turn'd out of the houſe to periſh of the diſeaſes that had render'd her unſerviceable; with the great good fortune of not being ſent to priſon for her board.

In this diſtreſs Jenny was walking the piazza, when the very notorious Doctor Sable met her. He gueſs'd her diſtreſs, he admir'd her perſon, he took her home, and he cur'd her.

During the time that this was about, a young fellow of fortune was brought by the ſame neceſſity to the doctor. This lady and he often met. Companions in misfortune eaſily become acquainted, and naturally compaſſionate one another. The gentleman was of an amorous diſpoſition; and ſeeing for a long time together no other female to attempt, he naturally fell in love with Jenny; and ſhe very well

knowing, that in order to eat, it was very neceſſary to her to have a lover, readily conſented to every thing he propos'd: both forgot the pains of their late diſcipline, as ſoon as thoſe pains were over; and they no ſooner left their beds of repentance at the doctor's, than one bed held them in a genteel apartment. The lover was happy in a miſtreſs whoſe health he was very well aſſured of; the lady was happy in a friend whoſe purſe ſhe found was long enough; and the doctor, who had refus'd to deliver her up, unleſs the lover would pay for her cure on his own terms, ſold her for ſomewhat more than any woman of this ſtamp, except Jenny, cou'd be worth.

Nothing cou'd be happier than the life of the new lovers was for ſome months; but the two uſual miſchiefs, at the end of this time, began to exert themſelves between them: the lover grew jealous, and the lady extravagant. Every man who knows the woman he loves has no virtue, dreads her giving up that, of which virtue alone can be the guard, to another: and every woman, who finds herſelf rais'd by theſe means from beggary to ſplendor, wants to carry that ſplendor up to madneſs. The lover became uneaſy about every male thing that enter'd his houſe; and when he had taken precautions to keep all mankind

out of his doors, and the lady always within them, unleſs when abroad in his company, grew even ſuſpicious of his footman; and the lady, who had ſeen one of her ſiſter baggages in the tarniſh'd ſuit that had twenty years before made a figure at ſome birth-day, muſt have a richer new one. They play'd theſe paſſions againſt one another a long time, and liv'd in an odd mixture of kiſſing and quarrelling; till the lady, who had hitherto always repaid a fit of jealouſy with a new piece of extravagance, and had found ſo many occaſions of theſe ſort of repriſals, that ſhe was now hung round with trinkets, ſaw one morning a chariot paſs under the window with a gay young fellow in it, who had often been particular in his behaviour to her in publick, but whom ſhe had hitherto look'd upon as a perſon of no conſequence.

She had long known him for her admirer but now ſhe ſaw him a man of figure, and as ſhe doubted not of fortune capable of ſupporting her, ſhe from that moment look'd upon herſelf as independent, and determin'd to bear no more of the ill-nature of her preſent friend.

She long'd for an occaſion of returning his threats by this means; but as none offer'd that day, ſhe had too much impatience to wait

wait till the next, and told him, that he had been a great while jealous of her, and us'd her very ill about it; that ſhe was as innocent as the child that was unborn; that ſhe did not care to take ſuch treatment any longer, as ſhe was conſcious ſhe never deſerv'd it; and that, unleſs he choſe to behave otherwiſe to her for the future, ſhe had another offer, which ſhe ſhou'd not decline.

The lover never had ſo much appearance to ground a jealouſy on as in this declaration; but it was now reduc'd to the alternative, that he muſt either give up jealouſy, or give up Jenny. He determined to keep the latter, and made a thouſand conceſſions, that gave the cunning baggage ſufficient proof of her power over him.

The lady promis'd from this hour never to forſake him; and to do her juſtice, ſhe kept her word as long as he remain'd with her. Jenny has her faults, Sir, continued the doctor; but if ſhe was not as honeſt to her keeper as ſhe is handſome, you wou'd never have been troubled with her hiſtory. They liv'd jovially together; but as the lover had now no guard againſt her extravagance, ſhe ſoon reduc'd his fortune ſo far, that it was neceſſary they ſhould retrench. They ſtill continu'd together, however; and as it has been much the

faſhion lately, for people to make wives of women whom they have kept till they are tir'd of as miſtreſſes, it was whiſper'd every where that this lady and her lover were married. The lady every where aſſerted it, the lover did not deny it, and Jenny was growing apace into an honeſt woman.

The credit of her imagin'd huſband ſtood her in good ſtead, after his affairs, by her management, made it neceſſary for him to diſappear. She took a houſe inſtead of her lodging, furniſh'd it, and ſaw herſelf miſtreſs of the value of ſome hundred pounds more than when he left her. They had manag'd ſo well, that no body ſuſpected his abſence as more than a journey of buſineſs into the country; and the lady was ſkreen'd by an unqueſtion'd marriage (though indeed there is not a ſyllable of truth in it) from being call'd upon for the money, even after it was known that her lover was broke and run away.

In this houſe you are now, Sir, to wait on her. You will find her poſſeſs'd of a thouſand charms you have yet no idea of. I am anſwerable for her health; and can give you this as a teſtimony of her natural honeſty, that ſince the time of her late friend's departing, ſhe has ſeen only one gentleman, who is as perfectly convinc'd of her truth

to

to him as I am; and who lodges in the houſe with her, eats with her, ſleeps with her, and ſcarce ſpends an hour in the four and twenty out of her company.

Loveill cou'd not but be greatly amaz'd at the habit and deportment of the gentleman who told him this ſtory, ſo ſtrangely different from one another; but as the lady was rather his buſineſs at this time than the prieſt, he put off all conſiderations of the latter for the preſent, to indulge at full in the thoughts of the former. He had been highly pleas'd with every part of the relation, till the doctor brought it down to the very concluding period, in which that cunning pandar had contriv'd to throw in ſome difficulties that appear'd inſuperable, in order to make himſelf neceſſary.

One of the firſt queſtions our hero aſk'd him was, Who is the lover that is at this time ſo happy with her? To which the artful doctor reply'd, with a ſmile, 'tis an old acquaintance of yours; a man of the moſt worth and honour perhaps in the kingdom; one whom I know you think ſo; but you are born, I think to be a rival to him: 'tis Captain Taſte, continued he, whom you found means to rob about half a year ago, at Bath, of Lady Juliet Scheme.

Loveill was more confounded and aſtoniſhed at this declaration, than at all that had paſs'd before. The captain was a man for whom he had a real eſteem. He was for many reaſons the laſt of all men in the world whom he would have choſen to have rival'd; and he gave up all hopes of the doctor's ſerving him againſt him, as he knew him to be his particular friend and patron. Little did he imagine the uſeful pliantneſs of this reverend gentleman's conſcience, or conceive that he was all this time only aiming to ſacrifice the moſt valuable things in the world to him, to engage him for a new friend, in the place of an old one, who had known him too well to be at this time over-fond of him.

Loveill told him he burn'd with impatience to wait on the lady; but that he ſaw no poſſible means of doing it. The good-natur'd doctor reply'd, with a ſmile that promis'd ſucceſs, the danger and the difficulty be mine, be only the conſequences yours. I am happy in the friendſhip of the captain; and with people who know the world as well as you and I do, the uſe of friendſhip is to be the means of deceit. I ſhew you what I ſacrifice to ſerve you; I know what I give you by this ſervice; and I leave it to you to reward me as you think I merit. I'll fix the unſuſpecting captain

at

at a tavern, and give you a letter of recommendation to the lady, that will not fail, with the advantage of your own addreſs, to give you as good a reception as you can wiſh.

A waiter was order'd to bring in pen, ink, and paper, and the doctor wrote;

Dear Jenny,

I Send you a lover worth a thouſand of your preſent friend. I know him, and let that ſatisfy you.—Be in no fear of the captain, I give you my honour for your ſecurity.—He does not ſtir from me till five in the morning.

Cureleſs.

Loveill read the letter, but as he was to pretend to know nothing of the contents of it, he made the doctor ſeal it. He gave him the time he deſir'd, which was an hour, to get away the captain, and then went up boldly to the door.

The ſervants were amaz'd to ſee any body of this figure, except Captain Taſte, entering the houſe; but the lover eaſily ſooth'd it to them, by telling them, their maſter was coming home in half an hour, and had deſir'd him to wait for him there.

His knowing of the captain's being juſt gone out with the doctor, gave credit to the familiar manner in which he introduc'd himſelf; and though there had been great cautions given a thouſand times to every one of the family againſt male-viſiters, the eaſy face with which this gentleman carry'd it, procur'd him an admittance to the lady.

CHAP. XVI.

Loveill pays a viſit to Jenny Loveleſs.—Her friend grows ſuſpicious about it.—Hiſtory of Dick Filch.

JENNY had receiv'd no notice of this viſit, and was not dreſs'd to receive a lover. Her face however carrry'd native arms in it, that made all ornament needleſs; and 'tis a queſtion whether the moſt ſtudy'd regularity cou'd have given her a better figure, in the eyes of ſo diſcerning a perſon as Loveill, than he ſaw her in under the genteel negligence of her undreſs. She had ſeen Loveill ſometimes in public, and that with eyes not altogether indifferent. She had taken particular notice of the ſurprize he expreſs'd as ſhe paſs'd by him that morning in the park; and was indeed ſo much prepar'd for an addreſs from him, that ſhe rather wonder'd how he got into her

her bed-chamber, than that ſhe ſaw him there.

The lover did not want the aſſiſtance of art to pretend an admiration too great to be utter'd by words: he ſtood in ſilent ſurprize ſome moments; he confeſs'd within himſelf, that this was the face which moſt of all he knew, grew handſomer on a nearer examination; and that the doctor had not exaggerated upon her beauty, when he told him, that what he had before ſeen of her was the leaſt part of her real charms. When this reverie, which the lady interpreted into more reſpect than any thing that words cou'd have delivered, was over, Loveill, who always knew how to faſhion his converſation to the perſon and the occaſion, deliver'd his credentials with a genteel bow; and as the lady was drawing back her hand with them, ſeiz'd upon it, and told her, that one of the ceremonies of admiſſion on theſe occaſions, was always the being admitted to the honour of kiſſing the hand to which they were delivered. He took the liberty he claimed, inſtead of ſtaying for its being granted him: and as love is a paſſion not eaſily ſatisfied, he immediately roſe to bolder freedoms, and ſtopp'd the mouth that was going to chide him, with a profuſion of kiſſes.

Jenny was at preſent ſo happily ſituated as to a gallant, that it was not eaſy for her to change, without doing it for the worſe; but ſhe had much the woman in her, and cou'd not help taking a pleaſure in the growing infidelity ſhe found in her heart in favour of the ſtranger, tho' it was at the price of ingratitude to one of the beſt-natur'd men in the world. She inſtantly chang'd the ſeverity of her countenance into a wanton ſmile; and catching Loveill by the hand ſaid, "You wicked "devil, by what means cou'd you deviſe "to get admittance hither?

Loveill told her the letter, tho' he was ſo happy to find it had not been quite neceſſary to him, would inform her. She opened it, and had no ſooner read it, than ſhe made her lover ſit down, rung for a ſervant to bring up ſome Burgundy, and told him, Dear Sir, however little conſequence this letter may be of to you, it is of the greateſt in the world to me. The doctor is a man of honour; and I know I am ſafe to the hour he mentions; ſo laugh and be merry: think of nothing but pleaſure till the deſtin'd moment of your going.

Loveill was rejoiced at finding ſo charming a creature ſo eaſy of acceſs, and himſelf at the height of an amour, when he thought he was but in the firſt ſcene of it.

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He ſupp'd, he laugh'd, he chatted, and play'd all the antic tricks that wine and wantonneſs cou'd inſpire a man of fire and ſpirit with. Punctual to the hour he took his leave, and ſecur'd the ſilence of the ſervants at the price of a guinea a head.

The lover was not more punctual in going than was the doctor in bringing home the captain. It was with ſome difficulty indeed that he had kept him out ſo long; but there was nothing he would not get thro' to ſave his honour.

The doctor, who had the familiarity of the lady's bed-chamber, enter'd with the captain. He was not a little pleas'd with ſeeing the lady excellently counterfeit the waking from a very ſound ſleep, and reproach him very heartily for keeping her bedfellow out to ſuch hours.

The pretended ſtorm on this occaſion in fine ran ſo high, that the doctor was forbid the houſe, and Jenny ſwore bitterly never to be a moment under the ſame roof with the captain again, if he continu'd to be acquainted with him.

The doctor went off full of delight at the excellent counterfeit, and very eaſy about her imprecations, tho' he was ſenſible that the eating his next meal depended on her breaking them. The captain was charm'd with ſuch an uncommon teſtimony

of

of diſſatisfaction at his abſence, and was haſting to bed to make up the quarrel, when he ſaw a paper upon the table directed to Miſs Jenny Loveleſs.

Infinite had been the care taken to clear away every footſtep of a man, or a ſupper, in the houſe, before the maſter of it returned; but as the devil ſometimes leaves his beſt votaries in the lurch, neither Jenny nor her lover had taken the precaution to burn the letter of introduction, which the uſeful doctor had given him; but this was the unfortunate paper that the captain ſeiz'd upon.

His old diſeaſe of jealouſy reviv'd in him at the ſight of the ſuperſcription: he took care that Jenny ſhou'd not ſee the emotions it gave him; but retiring into the next room upon ſome frivolous pretence, he faſtened himſelf in, and took out of his pocket the ſubject of his diſquiet. Upon this ſecond obſervation he ſaw it was the doctor's hand; and was laughing at his folly, and putting it up again, intending to ſlip back, without the ſuſpicion that the time he ſhou'd take in reading it might occaſion; but curioſity, ſtrong as his ſuſpicions had been before, prevail'd with him to open it.

It would not be eaſy to deſcribe the rage of this gentleman on ſeeing himſelf thus be-

betray'd and made a tool of by two people, both of whom were under ſuch infinite obligations to him. He determin'd to conceal his diſcovery for the preſent; and as great ſpirits are always doubly enrag'd at being impos'd upon, he determin'd nothing leſs than the executing ſome terrible vengeance upon them all.

Nothing tormented him ſo much as that he cou'd not make out by the letter, who the lover was that had been introduced by it. He cou'd have ſuppreſs'd all his paſſions for the time, except the curioſity of knowing this important part of the ſtory of his abuſe, but this was uncontroulable. He went down ſtairs, took one of the ſervants alone into a parlour; and after telling him that he knew the whole ſtory, threaten'd him with immediate deſtruction if he did not diſcover the perſon. The fellow, terrify'd to death, confeſs'd all he knew; but in that all confeſs'd nothing: he only cou'd tell his maſter, that a very fine gentleman had aſk'd for him, and had ſtaid with his miſtreſs till a little before he came in.

The captain ſaw he had all that the fellow cou'd inform him of; which being no more than he knew or ſuſpected at leaſt before, he was vex'd with himſelf for having expos'd his thoughts to a ſervant in ſo

intereſting an affair. He returned to the lady's chamber, and pretending ſickneſs from too much wine as the occaſion of his going down, threw himſelf into bed, and ſeemed to be aſleep in a moment. Jenny was not ſorry at his having come home in no condition to ſuſpect any thing: ſhe ſpent the remainder of the hours they were in bed in conſulting the means of ſeeing her new gallant again, while her friend employed his thoughts in meditating a horrible revenge.

The captain had ſeen enough of the world to know how to behave to advantage in ſuch a cataſtrophe: he knew that the way to avoid being ſuſpected in what he intended, was to ſeem to have no ſuſpicions.

He got up before the lady, put on a particularly gay humour, threw a purſe of guineas, which he told her he had won the evening before, into her lap, and ſpent an hour in pleading hard for bringing doctor Cureleſs into favour again: the lady was inexorable on this head, till the lover took occaſion from this cruelty of her temper to mention the grand buſineſs of his thoughts, by telling her, that he was unluckily obliged to go out of town that afternoon, and ſhould not be able to return till the next day; and added, that he could

not

not leave her without a reconciliation to the doctor, who he entreated might have leave to ſup with her, and read a play to her before ſhe went to bed, to deceive as much as might be the hours of his abſence.

The captain knew very well that Jenny would ſnatch at any opportunity of ſeeing the doctor and her new lover, while ſhe was ſecure of his abſence: but tho' this ſtale trick of a pretended journey into the country might have paſſed upon her well enough, he knew the ſubtle doctor too well, and ſuſpected the lover, whom he did not know, too much to hazard his vengeance on ſo uncertain a foundation. This which with moſt jealous men would have been the pretence to truſt all upon, with him was but an introduction to a ſcheme, which though ſecure enough in itſelf, he knew would be rendered by this impoſſible to be ſuſpected. There is no good diſpoſition without ſome foible. The only one chargeable upon the captain was a love of play: but as men of his fortune and underſtanding will not play with cheats and ſharpers, it was but now and then that a number of them, enough to make play agreeable, could meet: when this ſort of party was made, it never broke up till day-light. This was ſo certain, that the

lady would have made no ſcruple of inviting her new lover on it, without farther ceremony, for the night: a pretence of this was his ſcheme for giving her an imaginary ſecurity for the ſucceeding evening; which pretence he was cunning enough to render doubly ſtrong by the ſacrificing this imaginary country journey to it.

The lady was pleading againſt his going out of town with all that earneſtneſs that could be expected from a woman who wiſhed him very heartily to deny her; and the captain (the deceiving of whom was a taſk that this poor girl was very little equal to) while he was confirmed in his opinion of her by ſeeing thro' all this, was very reſolutely denying her, and was puzzling himſelf for ſome method of pretending an invitation to the club, when one of the people, who was uſually of the party, entered on a morning viſit.

The lady, who was very eager on her ſcheme, perſiſted even before this gentleman in entreating her lover not to go out of town, when the captain contriving to give the wink with a very intelligible ſignal to his friend to propoſe one of their meetings, it ſucceeded to his wiſhes, and the viſitor immediately declared on the lady's ſide, and told her, Madam, he ſhall not go; he can't go; for we meet to-night

at

at the ———, and if he is not among us, let him never ſhew his head there again.

The captain was very happy in ſeeing the ſcene ſo well play'd off by his friend: he made ſome faint excuſes, and ſaid a good deal about the neceſſity of his journey; but no arguments were allowed to have any force againſt ſo ſtrong an engagement; and, in fine, the lover, upon condition that Jenny would be reconciled to the doctor, conſented to ſpend the night at the club. Jenny was happier (as ſhe imagined) than ſhe had expected. She could ſcarce hide her joy from the ſtranger: the captain ſaw it too plainly, and held her in a proper contempt and deteſtation for it. She agreed to make up her quarrel; and the lover dreſſed and went out with his companion to dinner at the place where the pretended party was to keep him the night.

Jenny ſcarce had patience to ſee him out, before ſhe diſpatched a ſervant for the doctor; and that gentleman had ſcarce time to aſk her how ſhe had ſucceeded the night before, when he received the fulleſt anſwer in the world, in her deſire of ſeeing her gallant again immediately. She told the doctor of the captain's intended journey, and of its being put off for this party; and both of them agreeing that he

was

was ſafe enough for that night, the doctor was diſpatched to the lover to tell him to be with the lady as ſoon as it was dark.

This faithful emiſſary ſoon returned with Loveill's promiſe to be there: he dined with the lady. The captain dined at the houſe that had been mentioned, as the place of rendevouz for the evening. He told his friend the whole ſtory of the doctor, produced the letter from him, and in fine vowed with the moſt dreadful imprecations a violent revenge. His friend, who was leſs intereſted in the occurrence, had his reaſon more cool and proper to determine by. He took down a good deal the violence of the captain's rage: told him all whores are whores, and all young fellows will get at them if they can; that there was nothing in all this worthy the blood and fury he deſtined about it; and that it was by no means worth his while to get himſelf into a quarrel about a ſtrumpet, who would be as much puniſhed by turning her out of doors. "Dear captain, con-
"tinues he, I don't want to argue you out
"of a revenge for ſuch an injury as this: I
"only would have you take a proper one.
"Will you be adviſed. Make a jeſt of the
"affair; tell it as a ſtory of no conſequence
"to our friends that come in, and as
"you are ſure of finding your people all
"three

"three together, let us go in a body, roar-
"ing drunk, and a dozen ſtrong; make a
"riot at the lodgings, tumble every thing
"out of the windows, and tying the lovers
"together by the thumbs, in their ſhirt and
"ſhift, and faſtening the doctor in his robes
"before them, drive them about the ſtreets
"in this condition till the morning."

This was too jovial a ſcheme to be refuſed; the captain ſhook the contriver of it by the hand, told him he was the genius of riot, and acknowledged the folly of thinking of a more ſerious puniſhment for ſuch people. Their friends dropp'd in to them, one by one, afterwards; for there is no ſitting down at this gay place without having half the choice ſpirits of the town in company. The ſtory was told to every man as ſoon as he entered. every man joined in the ſcheme of the revenge, and about half an hour after twelve every man drank a pint of champaign to give him new ſpirits for the attack; and they marched out in a body, attended with a dozen or two of chairmen, from the door.

The captain led them up to the fortreſs, and giving orders for all to enter the houſe with him, and ruſh into the bed-chamber in an inſtant, he with one thundering kick burſt open the ſtreet-door, and in half a moment

moment after, that of the lady's chamber, where ſurrounding the bed with his companions, they firſt drew out the lady, and giving her into the cuſtody of the chairmen, they proceeded to take the lover by the arm.

The gallant ſeemed very unwilling to be forced out of his place: the captain, impatient to ſee who he was, called for a light; and running up with it to the feet of the bed, diſcovered to his inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment, the face of his good friend doctor Cureleſs.

He was with great triumph leading him into the next room, and preſenting him to the remainder of the company under the name of the moſt friendly doctor, when one of the party, who was not very intimate either with the captain or his acquaintance, catching the diſtreſſed gentleman by the arm, looked him full in the face, and burſting out into a laugh, cry'd, doctor, the devil—what the plague, do none of you know Filch of the Turk's-head?—Why there is not a man of you that he has not fetched a whore for five hundred times?—He was ſentenced to tranſportation two or three ſeſſions ago, for making a little too free with his miſtreſs's plate.—What the devil do you ſtare at? you muſt all know him well enough—

but

but if you have not your ſenſes, I am very ſure of him. Turn about your head, Mr. raſcal, continued he, addreſſing himſelf to the doctor, don't your wear a ſcar there ſtill, that I gave you upon an occaſion that ſhall be nameleſs at preſent.

The doctor was very unwilling to be examined on this ſubject, but the ſcar appeared. The company in general were ſtrangely amazed, but no body was ſo much ſo as the captain: he ſtill perſiſted in the identity of his old friend the doctor: the diſpute ran high, and ſo much obſtinacy appeared on all ſides, that it probably would not have been cleared up till morning, had not the gentleman who had occaſioned it put an end to it, by calling the criminal before him, and placing him ſhivering on his knees in the middle of the company.

Dick Filch, ſays he, I know you; and you know I do. You ſee the confuſion you have put this company into. You know I can hang you, if I pleaſe—and, ſirrah, I will do it, unleſs you immediately confeſs the whole truth.

The miſerable doctor found the neceſſity he was reduced to, and entreating the pardon and favour of the gentlemen, as he ſhould frankly confeſs the truth; he acknowledged that he was in reality the very identical

identical Dick Filch that gentleman had declared him to be. " I was condemned, " gentlemen, ſaid he, tho' innocent, becauſe " I had no body to appear to my character. " I was put on board the lighter, and I " bought my liberty for ſix guineas. I got " into an alehouſe before day, where as I " was ruminating what diſguiſe I ſhould hide " myſelf under, and what road of life I " ſhould fall into, I heard among the ſer- " vants that one doctor Cureleſs was that " morning gone out of town, never to re- " turn to it again, and thoroughly mortified " at having received a very poor reward for " a great deal of merit. I got acquainted, " continued he, with the fellow he had part- " ed with at his going, and who was to " follow him in the waggon that evening; " from him I learned the whole hiſtory of his " maſter's life, and equipping myſelf in " Monmouth-ſtreet in the robes of a clergy- " man, I concluded that diſguiſe to be ſuffi- " cient to prevent a diſcovery; and as I knew " there was no more recommendation neceſ- " ſary to this worthy gentleman, the captain, " than the being a man of ſome merit, and " the wanting a patron; my ſchool education " at Weſtminſter made me capable of ſup- " porting the character; and I applied my- " ſelf to him: he received me as I had expect-

" ed,

" ed, and I have lived upon his bounty " ever ſince.

" Gentlemen, concluded the doctor, I " have now put my life into your hands. I " am thoroughly ſenſible of the baſeneſs of " what I have been guilty of; and I ſubmit " to every thing you are pleaſed to make " the puniſhment of it."

The company ſtared upon another, and tho' the laugh was high upon the captain on the firſt diſcovery of the impoſtor, yet by that time he had half got thro' the ſpeech juſt related, they all agreed it was no imputation upon his underſtanding to have been deceived by him. They were all pitying the poor raſcal heartily, but the captain had a vaſt deal yet to enquire into. As to the lady, it was clear that ſhe deſerved no favour: the whole ſcheme of the revenge was now broke in upon, the captain thought it below him to exerciſe the vengeance upon a whore, and a runner at a bawdy-houſe, which he had deſtined againſt a gentleman and a villainous parſon; and he ordered her only to be turned out of doors in her ſhift, without farther ceremony.

The doctor was reſerved for farther examination. The captain demanded firſt, whether no body was expected at the lodgings that evening beſide himſelf? to which

it

it was anſwered yes: and as the cunning raſcal eaſily gueſſed by what means the diſcovery came about, he added, the gentleman whoſe recommendations you met with was the perſon. Now all appeared to be clearing up apace.—Who is that gentlemen, Sir! was the captain's next queſtion. This the poor doctor was alſo very well prepared for: he had conſidered that he had already loſt the captain, and that it was not worth his while to ſacrifice another friend to what could be of no real advantage to him, he had determined to conceal him, and to claim his protection on the merit of it; and juſt opportunely recollecting a young bluſtering fool whom he had a private grudge againſt, he gave in his name ſo very readily, that no body ſuſpected the truth of it.

The captain was doubly provoked at the inſignificency of the fellow, who he was made to believe was his rival with the lady. He damned her taſte, and that of all women-kind, all pimps, all parſons, and all the fools that were gulled by them; and would have been very free with the unhappy Mr. Filch's bones, but that the company interfered: they all pity'd the poor raſcal, but reſenting, as gentlemen, the inſult he had been guilty of, they condemned him to the next horſe-pond, where

where the chairmen had orders to duck him very ſeverely; and the intended revenge for the reſt terminated in a merry night in the lodgings with the captain's burgundy; the occaſion of which was declared to the neighbourhood by the drums and trumphets which the chairmen ſent thither the next morning; and by the hanging out of the unhappy Mr. Filch's canonicals, by way of trophy, from the window.

CHAP. XVII.

A very ſtrange miſtake of Loveill's, attended with very lucky conſequences. —A viſit to Mrs. Conqueſt.

LOVEILL, whoſe evil genius was not in a humour to perſecute him at this time, had received the doctor's meſſage of the morning before with extreme tranſport. He had become exceſſively fond of the lady; and was very ſeriouſly lamenting the abſence he muſt probably ſuffer from her before a ſecond opportunity offered for a viſit; when he heard the unexpected ſummons. The impatience he felt to ſee the lady, made him believe it was dark half an hour before it was ſo; and as he knew coaches and chairs might breed

ſuſpicion at a door where every thing was watched, he ſet out on foot.

He had been only once at the lady's houſe, and it is not wonderful that a man loſt in love and contemplation, as he was at this time, and not over attentive at beſt to trifles, ſhould miſtake the ſtreet it ſtood in. He ſtrolled into one that ran parallel with that he had been in the day before: and as the houſes were much of the ſame kind, he met with nothing to ſet him right: he had remark'd, that the houſe where the lady lived was at three doors diſtance from the corner of the ſtreet, and had a green lamp at it; and he very carefully walked up to one that anſwered the ſame particulars in the ſtreet he was now in.

The ſervant, who opened the door, readily, admitted a man of his figure, who ſhe ſaw was entering with all the familiarity of an intimate acquaintance; and on his aſking her if her lady was at home, put him into a parlour, told him ſhe was, and went to call her to him.

Loveill no ſooner heard the ruſtling of ſilks againſt the ſides of the ſtair-caſe, than his heart trembled with extreme joy, he forgot a premeditated ſpeech he had been preparing himſelf in all the way as he came along; but the moment the door opened he flew with open arms, and was teſti-

teſtifying his rapture with a thouſand kiſſes, when he diſcovered that he had ſeized upon a wrong woman. The lady he had in his arms was indeed as tall and as genteel as Jenny, but the coolneſs with which ſhe received his violent love convinced him, before the candles were brought in to ſhew him the lady's face, that he had made a very unlucky blunder.

He expected a ſevere rebuke from the lady he had treated with all this familiarity, but he very prudently determined to make his confeſſion before he was arraigned, and having yet no idea of his being got into a wrong houſe, but taking it for granted that he had beſtowed his civilities upon the ſiſter or couſin of his miſtreſs, he told her, Madam, I am under an infinite deal of confuſion for the rudeneſs I have fallen into. You will be ſo good to lay the crime of my miſtake on the darkneſs; and the joy I expreſſed in my ſalute will, I am ſure, be very pardonable, as you know the charms of the lady to whom it was intended.—I hope ſhe is at home.—

The lady anſwered yes, to his laſt queſtion, and with a great deal of good-nature told him, ſhe thought ſo well of that lady's charms, that ſhe ſhould have held him very inexcuſable if he had not under ſuch a miſtake, given occaſion for ſuch an excuſe.

This anſwer was ſo much in the ſtrain of his own thoughts, that he never doubted but the ſame perſon was the object of both; and tho' he had ſeen no other lady in the houſe the night before, he was far from judging it impoſſible that there ſhould be one there.

It was extremely to be ſuſpected that in ſuch a random buſineſs as this, the excuſe the lover made, and the mention of another lady in the houſe, would have unriddled the miſtake, and put an end to the viſit: but this was one of Loveill's fortunate days. The lady he had at firſt met with was no other than the very accompliſhed Miſs *Severe*, who had but a few days before received into her family, on a viſit, the blooming Mrs. Conqueſt; whoſe acquaintance ſhe had yet ſeen very few of, and therefore might eaſily ſuppoſe Loveill to be one of the number; and whoſe face ſhe knew would very well bear out all the raptures with which the viſitor ſpoke of her.

Miſs Severe made no more doubt of Loveill's being an acquaintance of Mrs. Conqueſt's, than he did of his being at Jenny Loveleſs's; and making an apology to Loveill for the lady's not immediately appearing, ſhe told him, that ſhe was not very well that afternoon, and had not intended

tended to ſee any company, but that ſhe would venture to promiſe him ſhe would wait upon him, and ordered her woman to tell her, that a gentleman was below who would ſtay for her dreſſing, if ſhe would give him the pleaſure of her company, which ſhe had ventured to promiſe and vow in her name.

Miſs Severe was one of thoſe ladies, who having been ten or a dozen years before celebrated beauties, retain enough of the remains of thoſe charms for which they were once adored, to make them ſtill eſteemed; and to add to her character, ſhe was one of thoſe few who have modeſty enough to remember, that the waining moon has not quite ſo much brightneſs as it had when in full glory. The polite acquaintance ſhe had always kept up, had given her a genteel eaſe in her manner and deportment, that could not fail to render her a firſt favourite with every man who could put love out of the queſtion; and an uncommon underſtanding improv'd by every good author, and every good character in the laſt twenty years, had rendered her a perſon from whoſe converſation the wiſeſt might receive inſtruction, and the moſt reſerved, pleaſure.

Such is the good ſide of this lady; but as human nature will not be perfect, nor

can any of our amiable qualities be without their allay, the foible, for there was but one in this agreeable character, was an extreme ſeverity in judging of other people's actions, and a too great love of cenſure.

Two people who knew ſo much of the world as Loveill and Miſs Severe, cou'd not fail of finding ſufficient matter for a long converſation: the ſpirit of this was kept up extremely well for two hours; at the end of which time, the lady to whom Loveill's viſit was underſtood to be intended, not ſeeming yet ready to come down, Miſs Severe made an apology for having pretended to entertain a man of his taſte ſo long by a woman's chat, and propos'd a game at piquet. Loveill determin'd, when he ſat down, to pay the lady the uſual compliment of loſing to her; but he found it not neceſſary to take any pains to do that. She play'd the game better than he did, and continued to win of him, till a polite French waiting-woman came down with the compliments of Mrs. Conqueſt; and that if the gentleman's patience was not quite tir'd out, ſhe wou'd wait on him.

Loveill was a little puzzled about his friend Jenny's going by two names; but he was greatly more amaz'd immediately afterwards, to ſee an infinitely finer creature

ture than Jenny, and an entire ſtranger to him, enter the room. He ſtarted at the ſight, and ſtood mute, to wait the event of his raſh viſit: but as he perceiv'd nothing ſaid about it, nor cou'd ſee any ſurprize in either of the ladies faces on the occaſion, he recover'd himſelf, went up to Mrs. Conqueſt, and ſaluted her, very politely telling her, they cou'd not quarrel with the time ſhe had beſtow'd in dreſſing, now they ſaw the effects of it.

Mrs. Conqueſt, who was as ready as himſelf with theſe flighty compliments, return'd it between jeſt and earneſt as ſhe ought; but the lover cou'd perceive nothing of reſentment or of ſurprize, either in her words or countenance. He now began to look round him, and to recollect ſo perfectly, that he ſaw no one thing about him, ſervants, furniture, or company, at all like what he had ſeen the evening before, that he perceived he had got into a wrong houſe.

His heart was ſtill of the old turn, prone to let go every beauty for the next; and it was not a deliberation of a moment, whether the favourite of yeſterday ſhould not be given up to the goddeſs of to-day. Jenny Loveleſs was no more remember'd, unleſs to ſerve as a foil by compariſon to Mrs. Conqueſt. But all the ſkill and diſ-

cernment of our gallant adventurer was not enough to diſtinguiſh what was the character of the people he had fallen in with. The behaviour of both ſeem'd, upon the whole, to promiſe him all the liberties he pleas'd; but the diſtance they kept, at the leaſt attempt to hint at any thing beyond the ſtricteſt bounds of decency, and the reſerve with which they both receiv'd any thing that had the leaſt tincture of freedom beyond the niceſt rules, told him, he was flatter'd with hopes, which, tho' he cou'd not underſtand why, were ſure to be vain ones.

Mrs. Conqueſt, to whom our lover paid his addreſſes the whole evening, was one of thoſe women who have been told they are the greateſt beauties of the age, till they believe it. She deſerv'd all the civil things that cou'd be ſaid of her perſon: but ſhe knew ſhe had a right to them, and receiv'd them as the payment of a debt, not as a bounty: and conſequently, though ſhe would have held the man very cheap who offer'd them too cooly, yet ſhe allow'd it as no merit in him who deliver'd them ever ſo ſenſibly.

Mrs. Conqueſt was a deſcendant of a noble family, and carry'd a dignity about her, which people unacquainted with thoſe of the firſt quality might miſtake for pride; but

but which, to thoſe us'd to people in high life, only diſtinguiſh'd her as belonging to the number. To an uncommon elegance of perſon, ſhe had added a conſummate taſte in dreſs, and had trifled away an infinite deal of money in the neceſſaries to it. Her underſtanding, when ſhe pleas'd to uſe it ſeriouſly, was equal to any body's; but ſhe had taken a ſtrong turn to the lighter flouriſhes of diſcourſe, and had a ſprightlineſs in her expreſſion, a readineſs of wit, and an addreſs in raillery, which charm'd every body ſhe convers'd with; and which, falling in with the judicious ſeverity of her female friend, and the diſcerning criticiſm of Loveill, made up a converſation which any body who had heard would have wiſh'd to laſt for ever.

They had chatted away three hours in great familiarity, when the ladies perceiving that Loveill had no more mind to go, than they had to part with him, eaſily underſtood one another's looks; and Miſs Severe, who took upon her to be the lady of the ceremony, told him, that they had ſtaid to a ſtrange hour without ſupping, but they were afraid to fright him away by naming it, till it was now too late for him to do it any where elſe; and that they therefore laid an embargo on him for at leaſt one hour longer.

Loveill ſaw it would be neceſſary for one of them to go out of the room for a moment or two on this occaſion, but he dreaded it would be the wrong. Fate order'd matters better than his fears had foreſeen; and after a few minutes Miſs Severe ſlipp'd out to give the neceſſary directions. The lover dreaded to make the uſe he wiſh'd of the opportunity; but recollecting that he ſhou'd not have another, he call'd up all his courage, not to call it impudence, to his aid; and was running to Mrs. Conqueſt with open mouth, and open arms, when that lady confounded his intent by riſing from her ſeat, and inſtead of anſwering him, pulling the bell at her elbow.

The ſervant who enter'd was ordered to ſweep up the hearth, and to do twenty other things, that kept him in the room till the lady who had left it arrived there again.

Loveill now gave up all for loſt, and with a trembling heart expected to hear her every moment tell her friend what had like to have paſs'd; but he was again deceived: they fell into another very agreeable converſation, which laſted till ſupper came up.

Our heroe continued in the utmoſt perplexity during the remainder of his viſit, which

which did not end till the watchman warn'd them that it was paſt three o' clock, and a ſtar-light morning. He behav'd with uncommon reſpect to the lady whom he had fallen in love with, but who he found would neither hear of it, nor refuſe it; and indeed ſeem'd at this time to have neither any mind to agree with him, nor to quarrel with him. He took his leave when he was heartily aſhamed of ſtaying any longer; and unable to deny himſelf an acquaintance with thoſe lips, every breath of which had charm'd him for ſo many hours together, he very gravely and prudently went up to the other lady, to wiſh her a good night in form: Miſs Severe ſaw the intent of this civility well enough; ſhe receiv'd it with a ſmile, and Mrs. Conqueſt very unexpectedly contriv'd, as his lips were approaching hers, to ſlip her hand between and receive the civility on that, with her head toſs'd aſide with a ſmile of ſecurity and triumph.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Some private converſation about Mr. Loveill.—A viſit to Captain Taſte.—Loveill hears the whole hiſtory of the laſt night's tranſaction; and is informed of the hiſtory of Mrs. Conqueſt.

LOVEILL was no ſooner gone, than Miſs Severe delivered her thoughts of him by telling her friend, upon my ſoul this is a charming fellow. Mrs. Conqueſt reply'd, he does not want aſſurance:—but in the name of wonder who is he? Miſs Severe, after a wild ſtare, reply'd in a very low voice, what in the name of wonder can you mean by that queſtion?—

After a little more explanation and amazement on both ſides, it appear'd that neither of the ladies had ever ſeen him before in their lives; that Miſs Severe, in whoſe houſe the other lady had been but a little while, had taken him for one of her acquaintance; and Mrs. Conqueſt ſuppoſed him an intimate of the others, who had fallen in on an accidental viſit, and that ſhe had aſk'd her down to make a third of the party: they both agreed, that the gentleman muſt have had the impudence of the devil,

devil, as well as his cunning, to have concerted a plan for the impoſing upon them both by means of one another; for their ſagacity never hinted to them, that he had fallen in by mere chance.

On enquiring of the ſervants, they found that he had given very liberally among them; but that not one of them, any more than themſelves, had ever ſeen his face before; and, (which vex'd the ladies not a little) that not one of them knew ſo much as his name.

Miſs Severe frankly acknowleged, that ſhe did not deſire to drop the acquaintance, but to what purpoſe he had made it, ſhe owned did not appear to her. To this the other anſwered with a ſmile, ſo much the more cunning he, to hide it from you: it would have been no ſecret to me, if *James* had not come in to my relief, under the pretence of mending the fire, when you left the room to order ſupper.

Miſs Severe ſpoke very freely in his praiſe: Mrs. Conqueſt was more reſerv'd: after jointly determining that as love was the buſineſs, they ſhou'd hear more of it in the morning, they took leave and went to bed.

Loveill had been before-hand with the ladies in point of intelligence; for he had learnt their names from their own converſation;

ſation; and his diſcernment had let him enough into the hiſtory of Mrs. Conqueſt, to convince him, that ſhe was the propereſt woman in the world for a wife for him. He was up two hours before his uſual time, and directing a card to Mrs. Conqueſt, with Miſs Severe in *** ſtreet, he fill'd it with his compliments, and added a notice, that he wou'd do himſelf the pleaſure of making them a viſit that afternoon.

The name of the ſtreet in the direction of the card, was that where Jenny Loveleſs lived; for he had never yet conceived that he had fallen into a wrong one; and the footman who carry'd it was directed to a houſe ſomewhere near the right-hand corner. The fellow knock'd at every door of the ſtreet in vain; and in fine brought back the card to his maſter, who was eager with expectation of his compliments being well receiv'd. The peeviſhneſs of his temper on the diſappointment vented itſelf very liberally under the names of fool, puppy, blockhead, and the like to the footman; and a chairman was ſent with the card, with the ſame directions. He return'd, after the ſame ceremony, in the ſame fruitleſs manner; and Loveill now, out of patience at his ill luck, determined to venture a morning viſit to them at random.

He got into a hackney coach, and directed the driver of it to ſet him down at the end of the ſtreet he ſuppoſed the houſe he had ſpent his laſt evening at, ſtood in. After going the length of it twice with great obſervation, he confirmed himſelf in the opinion, that the third houſe from the corner was certainly it: and tho' it appear'd to him almoſt as plainly too, that this which he had determined upon was the houſe of Jenny Loveleſs, which was at this time the laſt place in the world he would have wiſh'd to get into, yet he over-rul'd that opinion, and perſwaded himſelf he had been only puzzled by that original miſtake at firſt, and had fallen into the company of the laſt evening by means of it.

He boldly went up to the door, knock'd at it, and enquir'd of the ſervant who opened it, if Mrs. Conqueſt was within: a voice from the parlour call'd out to the ſervant before he had liberty to anſwer, Who is it that aſks for Mrs. Conqueſt? and on the fellow's anſwering, a gentleman, the ſame voice return'd, deſire him to walk in. Loveill did not refuſe; and while he was rubbing his ſhoes on the matt, heard the ſame voice add, (ſpeaking to ſomebody elſe) I want to ſee her myſelf of all women in the world, and depend

pend upon it between us we ſhall make out where ſhe is. There was not time for ſaying more, before Loveill, who thought he certainly knew the voice, enter'd the room, and found it to be Captain Taſte who ſpoke, and who was ſurrounded with the ſons of riot, who had made the laſt night's debauch there. He was now ſenſible enough that he was indeed in Jenny Loveleſs's lodgings; and though he yet knew nothing of what had happen'd, he would have been well enough pleaſed to be out again. The captain ſtarted at the ſight of him; but taking him by the hand in a very good-natur'd manner ſaid, O d——n it, is it you? then two-pence is more than my ſhare in her is worth: he continu'd, "We have had two meſſages this morning "about this lady already, and I am con- "vinced ſhe lives ſomewhere here about, "by ſo many different enquiries. There is "no woman in the world I ſhou'd ſooner "be after myſelf; but if you're upon the "ſcent I give up: I know what you are "for a rival already; but come, d——n "animoſity; here's Lady Juliet's health to "you in a bumper, for all what's paſt; I "think ſhe jilted you as fairly as ſhe did "me ſoon after."

There was not a man in the company but pledg'd the captain to ſo univerſal a

toaſt with due honour. Loveill drank a half pint to her; and as he ſaw the captain's natural good-humour was now increas'd by a debauch, he readily ſat down among the company at his requeſt; and on his entreating him to ſay what he had ſeen or heard of Mrs. Conqueſt, frankly told him, that he had ſupp'd with her the night before; but that if he was to periſh for it, neither he, nor his ſervant, nor a chairman, whom he had ſent, cou'd make out the houſe this morning, though he was confident that he was now within two or three doors of it.

Though the captain found he was diſappointed in the opinion of there having been three enquiries made there that morning, from three different people, he found this one account ſtronger than them all; and was convinc'd, beyond all diſpute, that the lady was ſomewhere there about. If there cou'd have been any ſuſpicion that Loveill was the man whom they expected to have found there the night before, this evident engagement at another place would have clear'd him of any appointment there; and the captain, impatient to know ſomething more about the lady, whoſe name he had been alarmed with, told Loveill, he wou'd make out any thing for him that he cou'd,

pro-

provided he would tell him in return what he knew of her.

The captain's firſt queſtion was, upon your honour, Loveill, is ſhe marry'd? Loveill, who began to ſuſpect a little by this time, that there had been ſome miſchief on his account there the night before, and who knew that his engagement with this lady was the only thing to prove him to have been wholly out of the ſcrape, did not think it proper to confeſs the date of his acquaintance with the lady, or his ignorance of her affairs, but reply'd very poſitively, no. The captain, with a handſome apology, then aſk'd him, in confidence of friendſhip, if he intended to marry her? Loveill anſwered, that he believ'd he ſhou'd: and the captain very generouſly replied, Sir, I have no ſuch thoughts, and therefore I ſhall not pretend to attempt her; but if I can do you any ſervice you may command it.—And firſt, Sir, let me aſk you, by way of helping you to find her, what time did you part from her laſt night? Loveill told him, between three and four. Did you hear any riot near you before you went away, continued the captain? Loveill told him, no. Then my dear friend, ſays he, you are not quite ſo near the houſe you ſupp'd in as you imagine. No; roars out one of the company with

with an oath: if you did not hear a riot before that time laſt night, you was not within a mile of this place.

This led into a converſation that Loveill wanted to be ſtarted of all things in the world, though he did not think it prudent to hint any thing about it himſelf; and he was immediately entertained with the hiſtory of the diſcovery of the unfortunate Jenny, and the more unfortunate Doctor Cureleſs. He was heartily concerned at the ſtory, and eaſily conceived, that the truth had been, that the doctor and the lady, after ſitting up till they were tir'd to wait for his coming, had kept up the ſpirit of the aſſignation, at laſt by going to bed together.

He kept his countenance ſo well as not to give the leaſt ſuſpicion; and when he had heard the whole, pity'd the poor devils; but deſir'd the captain to give him leave to change the ſubject to one his heart at preſent was more intereſted about, and tell him what he knew of Mrs. Conqueſt, for, continued he, as heartily as I am in love with her, and as well acquainted as I am with her, I have never been able to make out her hiſtory.

Mrs. Conqueſt, Sir, reply'd the captain, is now barely ſix and twenty; perhaps you don't know that ſhe is a widow, or little

imagine

imagine that ſhe has been twelve years marry'd. She was a charming wench, of ſmall fortune, at a ſchool in the ſame town where a relation of hers liv'd, who was courted by the very famous *old Powers*. The lover was a little more than old enough to have been the father of the lady he made love to; but ſome prudent conſiderations, among which were his good fortune and good-nature, had ſet this aſide, and the articles were drawn, and the day fix'd for the marriage. The lover was on a familiar party one afternoon at his miſtreſs's, when the girl came in from ſchool to make a holliday viſit. You who know that Mrs. Conqueſt is now by much the fineſt woman in the kingdom, may eaſily conceive what ſhe was at fourteen.

The old fellow chang'd his reſolution, quitted the aunt, fell in love with the girl, and marry'd her. She has now liv'd with him an irreproachable life of twelve years. The idle people of the world, who tell every thing not under the circumſtances it is truly in, but under thoſe they wiſh it in, have not indeed ſpar'd their ill-nature or vanity about her. But what proves the old fellow's confidence in her is, that he has left her every penny of his fortune. She is worth your having; and I am apt to believe you may have her, if you can get

get over one difficulty; which as you will find out ſoon enough of your own accord, I won't diſhearten you by telling you of.

Loveill thank'd the captain for his intelligence, and propos'd a bumper to her health. The company had ſlept themſelves ſober ſince the laſt night's debauch; but a few glaſſes well ply'd among them ſoon got the better of them again; and Loveill, after trying to get what more he cou'd out of them, left them in about an hour ſo drunk again, that there requir'd no great ceremony in his taking leave.

CHAP. XIX.

Loveill takes ſome care of his friends Jenny and the doctor.—He meets Mrs. Conqueſt very unexpectedly.—Becomes acquainted with her whether ſhe will or no.

IF our hero had not been able two hours before to make out the houſe where his charmer lived, his head was at preſent much too giddy to give him any better intelligence about it. All that he cou'd conceive, on his getting into the ſtreet, and examining the door and the windows of that he had now been in, was, that it was really

really and abſolutely the ſame that he had been ſo happy in the night before; and it appear'd a ſort of enchanted caſtle to him, inhabited at one time by Jenny and her friends, and at another by Mrs. Conqueſt and hers. All that he was in condition to reſolve was, that the propereſt thing he cou'd now do was to get home, and ſleep himſelf into a ſoberer hour, for the concerting what plan he ſhou'd follow in the perplexing buſineſs before him.

What he intended for a nap of an hour laſted him till five o' clock in the afternoon. At which time, awakening at once from ſleep, and from the fumes of the large quantity of wine he had pour'd down with the captain, it was ſome time before he cou'd ſettle it in his mind, whether the ſtrange embarraſs of the morning had been any thing real or a dream. His concern for Jenny Loveleſs, whom he was conſcious he had expos'd to ruin, touch'd him too nearly not to make him ſenſible that the occaſion of it was too true. But the finding the captain and his good companions in a place where they told him they had ſpent the night, and had paſs'd thoſe very hours in a violent noiſy riot, which it appear'd to him that himſelf had ſpent at the very ſame place in a ſcene of great tranquillity, had ſo much the appearance

pearance of magick, or of the inconſiſtence of a dream, that it was not eaſy for him to perſuade himſelf that there had been any thing real in it.

The good effects of a pot of coffee, and of the half hour's ſerious contemplation which he paſſed while drinking it, ſobered him however ſo perfectly, that he found too much reality in many parts of what had paſſed, to doubt any longer of the reſt. If he was perplexed and out of humour at miſſing of finding Mrs. Conqueſt, he was not a little pleaſed, on the other hand, at having learned her hiſtory from the captain, and found her ſo proper a perſon for his purpoſe. But the remembrance of the accident by which he had fallen upon this diſcovery, and of the hiſtory of a ſcene, in which nothing but an accident, which he could not yet comprehend the nature of, had prevented his bearing a very unpleaſant ſhare, filled him with ſurprize and horror.

He congratulated himſelf on his eſcape out of a ſcrape, into which his vices had like to have led him, and in which he eaſily perceived he muſt either have done an infinite deal of miſchief, or ſubmitted to ſuffer as much. The next thought, to the joy for his own ſafety, was the compaſſion for the misfortunes and ſufferings

of

of the two companions in his crimes. He perceived by the captain's manifeſting no ſign of ſuſpicion, that they had both had too much honour and conſtancy, or at leaſt too much prudence to impeach him; and he determined to ſacrifice to the joy of his eſcape, and the ſenſe he had of their deplorable condition, a part at leaſt of what he would have been willing to have given for his immunity, had he been caught, as he knew not why he was not.

He took ſuch precaution to enquire after them, that he found them in leſs than an hour, where they were condoling their common misfortune in the only place they could be in till they had cloaths to ſit up in, that is, in bed.

His new attachment to Mrs. Conqueſt gave him a hearty mind to break off with Jenny; and as he always knew how to put a good face upon a bad cauſe, he threw it on his care and concern for her. Dear Jenny, ſays he, I am diſtracted to ſee the misfortunes my indiſcretion has brought upon you and my friend. I am the unhappieſt raſcal in the world, and by what fate it is I am ignorant; but I ſcarce ever miſſed ruining whatever woman I have been acquainted with, tho' I know not by what means. The doctor I will take care to be at leaſt as good a friend

friend to, as the perſon he has loſt on my account; and as for you, Jenny, as I have a ſincere regard for your welfare, the only way I can manifeſt it is by taking my leave of you with what I hope you will eſteem a handſome preſent, and when I have put you in a way of providing for yourſelf again, ridding you of the unluckieſt acquaintance you ever met with, and perhaps the only man in the world who would be ſure to be your deſtruction a ſecond time.

Loveill, as he concluded this ſpeech, put into Jenny's hand a bank note of two hundred pounds, and giving the doctor at the ſame time one of fifty to new rig himſelf with, deſired him to dine with him the next day, and took a haſty leave.

His thoughts were much eaſier as he left the apartment of his friends than when he went to it; he felt himſelf fairly free from a troubleſome ſet of thoughts about an amour he was tired of, and at full liberty to devote himſelf wholly to another, that both was, and deſerved to be, vaſtly more agreeable to him.

He was check'd however in the midſt of the ſallies of his joy, by the remembrance of the terrible obſtacle which his new friend the captain had told him lay in his way to the lady; this gave him a tenfold anxiety, becauſe he did not know

what it was, and inſtead of the pain he ſhould have felt at its appearing to him in the form of the worſt of all poſſible ones, he now felt it in the ſhape of that, and of every other of whatever kind that his fancy could deviſe a poſſibility of.

Uncertainty is the greateſt of all torments in the human mind. A man of Loveill's impatient temper could not but be doubly affected by what threatened, and at the ſame time kept itſelf ſecret from him: he had determined to be in earneſt in the new amour; and to know his fate at once, he reſolved to inform himſelf from the lady's own mouth of this terrible obſtacle the moment he ſaw her. The difficulty was how to bring about that meeting which was to determine his fortune; he knew neither where to ſee the ladies, nor where to ſend to them; and as to publick places he had frequented them too cloſely to give him the leaſt hope of meeting her among the gay world there, ſince he concluded, if ſhe had not wholly avoided them, it could not have happened that he ſhould have firſt ſeen her at her own houſe. Uncertain what to do with himſelf, he ſauntered into the Park, and thence to Ranelagh: he found by his adventure with the captain, that the name of Mrs. Conqueſt was ſufficiently known, tho' her perſon had been

been kept immur'd; and he was not without hopes, that by enquiring among the gay part of the world, he might from one or other get the intelligence he wanted.

He had ſcarce entered the door of this ſcene of pleaſure, when full of the thoughts of his enquiry, and caſting his eyes about the room to ſee who he ſhould firſt addreſs himſelf to, the ladies he had been all the day in queſt of, walked up to him. They had neither expected to ſee him there, nor were at that time thinking of him: they ſtarted, and the lover was not without ſome emotions of ſurprize on his own part, mixed with an extreme joy; he addreſſed them in the politeſt manner in the world; told the widow of the pain he had been in about her, and the ſtrange perplexity that had attended his attempts to find her out; concealing the circumſtances of the ſtory of Jenny, but acknowledging that he had fallen into the houſe of an intimate acquaintance, when he thought himſelf at hers.

The gallant language in which Loveill delivered himſelf, and the many civil things he took care to intermix with every circumſtance, ſpoke his paſſion in very ſtrong terms. But the cruel widow, inſtead of the return he had expected from his laſt night's familiarity and good-humour, look-

ed very grave, and aſked him, "Pray, Sir, "to which of us is all this fine compliment "directed? You will pardon us that we "are not able to aſcertain it without your "own explanation, for we can no more "recollect that we either of us ever ſaw "you in our lives before laſt night, than we "can conceive how we came to have the "honour of a viſit then. While that lady "received you as my acquaintance, and I "as hers, you muſt have heard very little "of us not to know you was ſure of a "very friendly reception: but——"

Mrs. Conqueſt was going on in this ſerious manner, when Loveill found it his buſineſs to ſtop the torrent before it made way for any more miſchief: he ſaw the lady's foible was the being too ſenſible of her own beauty, and he attack'd her upon that ſcore. "There is not more difference, "Madam, ſays he, between our ideas of "a Venus and a Juno, than between Mrs. "Conqueſt ſmiling, and the ſevere Mrs. "Conqueſt. I acknowledge that I fell in "your way a ſtranger, and by accident.— "In what corner of the world you have "been hitherto bury'd that I have not be-"fore ſeen you, I cannot conceive. You "hear me ſay I fell into the houſe of an ac-"quaintance this morning, in making, as I "thought, a viſit to you; I fell into your

"houſe

" houſe laſt night in making, as I thought,
" a viſit to that acquaintance: accident, up-
" on my life and honour, perfect happy, and
" hitherto unaccountable accident threw me
" in your way. I remained with this lady
" till you came down, in hopes of ſeeing a re-
" lation the day before come town;-- why I
" remained with you as long as you would
" let me afterwards, you need not aſk me."

Mrs. Conqueſt, (whoſe anger had ariſen from an opinion, that Loveill's getting into her company was a concerted deſign, and as ſuch an affront upon her underſtanding) was no ſooner convinced of the truth of what he now told her, than her face recovered all its wonted pleaſantry; ſhe laughed at the accident, enquired into the particulars of it a little more freely than perhaps Loveill, who was not prepared to evade certain circumſtances that were not very proper for her ear, would have choſen; and the good opinion Miſs Severe had taken up of his underſtanding, making the way to an acquaintance eaſy, he loſt no opportunity of advancing it: in a quarter of an hour they were as intimate as they had been the night before, and Loveill upon as good a footing as he could wiſh to be. They laugh'd away the remainder of the evening till it was time either to go, or to ſit down to ſupper there. Loveill

pleaded hard for the latter; he prevail'd; and it was near one before the happy party had any thoughts of breaking up.

The lover ſaw he made advances very ſucceſsfully with the lady, and that he had nothing to do but to keep up the ſpirit of their preſent acquaintance, to hope for every thing from it. He determined not to loſe the enchanced caſtle where they lived any more; but the difficulty was how to get at it.

He knew he could venture a good deal upon the ſagacity of his ſervant, who as there was now no body left in the place but himſelf and the ladies, muſt neceſſarily be got into company with theirs, and who from the remembrance of his miſcarriage of the morning, if he ſuſpected theſe ladies for thoſe he was then ſent to, would take care to know where to find them hereafter: but this was too uncertain a bottom to riſk a venture of ſo much conſequence to himſelf upon: he determined to go home with them; and to bring this on without rudeneſs or ſuſpicion, he gave a look to this fellow (who had been with him long enough to be an adept at that ſort of language) which was well enough underſtood. The footman ſlipp'd away from Mrs. Conqueſt's ſervant, diſcharged his

his maſter's coach, and ſent it to London as faſt as it could drive.

It was no ſooner got out of the gate than he ran up to his maſter, and ſpeaking loud enough for the ladies to hear, ſaid, Sir, your coachman has driven away: I followed him; but he ſays a lady has given him half a guinea to carry her to the Tower, would you pleaſe I ſhould go to town and ſee if I can bring up any of the night coaches?

Blockhead, replied Loveill with a pretended peeviſhneſs that the fellow well enough underſtood, will you never learn to do your buſineſs without plaguing me with your impertinence? Get one as faſt as you can.——

The widow ſaw nothing of the plot in all this, but her pride could not condeſcend to offer what ſhe had as much a mind to as Loveill; Miſs Severe was leſs upon the reſerve, ſhe call'd back the fellow as he was running off, and told his maſter they had room in their coach, and would ſet him down. Loveill accepted the offer with great diffidence, as he ſaw Mrs. Conqueſt a little confounded about it; but he triumphed ſufficiently in ſecret in the ſucceſs of the only ſcheme that could continue his knowledge of her. The ladies had not yet heard what part of the town their gallant

lived in; and on enquiring where they ſhould ſet him down, it appeared that his lodgings were much farther from the place than theirs, and that he muſt of neceſſity ſet them down by the way. He longed for the name of the ſtreet that the coachman ſhould be ordered to ſtop in; and when his patience was tired with waiting for the word, he ventured to aſk them where he ſhould direct him to drive. It had at length come into his head, that all the confuſion of the morning had been owing to his getting into a wrong ſtreet; he expected this to be cleared up every moment, by learning the name of the right one; but he was terribly diſappointed on hearing the orders, which were only to ſtop where he took up the company.

His next hope was in marking the places thro' which the coach ſhould paſs, but this was as ineffectual a way as the former. The fellow took the firſt opportunity of turning out of Piccadilly, drove thro' a number of nameleſs ſtreets among the new buildings, and ſo perfectly puzzled the lover, that he had given it up as a vain attempt long before he got into the bounds of his own knowledge, and conſequently never attempted to know a ſtreet when he could have done it. They were in the midſt of a very entertaining ſtory from Miſs Severe, when

when the coach ſuddenly ſtopp'd at the door of the ladies houſe. And the widow made an apology that it was too late to aſk Loveill in; he anſwered, only, Madam, till I hear the end of this excellent adventure; and partly with, partly without leave entered with them. The outſide of the houſe, and its ſituation, both which he carefully remarked as he got out of the coach, had almoſt convinced him that it was ſtill the ſame with Jenny's; but he was no ſooner entered it, than he was convinced of his error. He kept up the ſpirit of the evening converſation for about a quarter of an hour, when at the repeated ſollicitations of his coachman, and ſome grave looks of the widow, he very unwillingly took his leave.

CHAP. XX.

Loveill attacks Mrs. Conqueſt in form —He meets with duke Shameleſs—and delivers the lady from a very great perplexity.

THE coach was no ſooner out of ſight of the houſe where Loveill had ſet down the ladies, than he got out, examined every particular of the ſtreet to be

ſure of knowing it again; and after aſking the name of it of the coachman, and commanding his man to remember it, as well as writing it down himſelf, he got in again pretty well ſatisfied that he ſhould be plagued with no more miſtakes about it; and ordered the fellow to drive to his lodgings.

The good reception he had met with from the lady gave him great ſpirits, and fully perſuaded him of the ſucceſs he was before ſo much in doubt about. He was ſurprized, but not out of humour at the change he had ſeen in her temper; or rather at the being informed of the miſtake he had at firſt fallen into; by finding her ſo very diſtant and reſerved, tho' polite in all her behaviour to him, now ſhe ſaw him on the footing of a ſtranger, when ſhe had been ſo very free at the firſt evening's viſit, in which ſhe miſtook him for an old acquaintance of her friend's.

He ſaw this would make his buſineſs a work of more time than he had imagined; but he ſaw too that the lady was worth the waiting for, and he determined to have her on her own conditions: what moſt diſturbed him was, that tho' he had now eſtabliſhed himſelf very well with her, he had yet found no opportunity of addreſſing

dreſſing himſelf to her as a lover. He was conſcious to himſelf, that baſhfulneſs was not among the number of his ill qualities, and could not but applaud (tho' at the ſame time he ſuffered an intolerable uneaſineſs from it) the addreſs with which ſhe had turned off every attempt he had made to ſpeak upont he ſubject, and evaded every occaſion of it.

His good ſucceſs had elated his thoughts ſo much, that he had hitherto forgot the notice the captain had given him of ſome terrible obſtacle that was in the way to his ſucceſs with this lady; it at length recurr'd to his thoughts in all its terrors: he perceived not only that there was truth in what he had been told, but that whatever it was, it had carry'd great weight in the lady's thoughts; and tho' he could make no conjecture as to the nature of it, he naturally reſolved the ſhyneſs of that lady, in regard to offers of love, which he ſaw was forced, and not at all of a piece with the reſt of her character, wholly into the effect of it.

A formidable rival would have been the firſt thing that offered to his thoughts, but that he knew the charms of the lady too well to ſuppoſe a happy lover could be an hour out of her company; and he ſaw plainly enough that no man had viſited her

in the laſt two days; nor had any body, whoſe looks he could read love in, accoſted her at Ranelagh. The terrors of the obſtacle remained, but the nature of it was a ſecret that he could by no means get at the bottom of.

He paſſed the night as a lover full of hopes and not leſs full of fears, might be expected to do. In the morning he determined to brave his fate, and preſs an explanation at a viſit that he intended to make her immediately: he ſent his compliments and notice of it; but he received for anſwer that the ladies were ill with being up ſo late the two laſt nights, but would be glad to ſee him in the afternoon. He ſpent the intermediate time in more anxiety than the fair cauſe of it imagined; and he let not a moment ſlip as ſoon as it was time to go to her.

He would fain have entered into a pleaſant familiarity, which Mrs. Conqueſt check'd with her looks, and kept within ſuch bounds as ſhe pleaſed. His tongue itched a thouſand times to come to an explanation on the grand point; and at length, after an hour or two's uneaſineſs of this kind, he grew reſolute, and determined to hazard every thing rather than remain in this perplexing anxiety about it.

You'll pardon me, Madam, ſaid he, with a good deal of confuſion which he could not hide, nor would have thought convenient to do ſo if he could.—I am extremely intereſted in every thing you ſay, but you ſpeak to me with a reſerve.—He was going on, when a violent thundering at the door broke in upon the thread of his diſcourſe, and declared a viſitor of ſome conſequence at hand. The ladies looked confounded, but Mrs. Conqueſt recovered herſelf enongh to tell him—Sir, it is not neceſſary for you to go on with your queſtion. What you are in doubt about will be explained to you. We had not mentioned to you that there is a ſort of maſter to this houſe, but you will ſee him.—I muſt only add to you, that I want a friend: if you dare be honeſt and diſintereſted, I know you dare do every thing elſe—be one to me.

The lady would have ſaid a good deal more, but the viſitor was at the door of the room. He entered with all the familiarity and authority of huſband, but he explained away that ſuſpicion in an inſtant by reeling up to the lady, and ſaying, my dear widow give me a kiſs.

Loveill, tho' he had not heard ſo much as he wiſhed from the lady, nor ſo much as he ſaw ſhe wiſhed to tell him, had taken great

great notice of every word ſhe had ſaid, and rejoiced not a little in the opportunity of doing a ſervice to the woman, whom, of all the world, he wanted to lay an obligation on. The viſitor had taken no ſort of notice of Loveill as he entered, but that gentleman had been amazed to ſee in him no other than the famous duke Shameleſs; a man whoſe inſolence had long called upon the world in vain for chaſtiſement, and who was now fallen into the beſt hands in the world to give it him.

There is not perhaps a man of the age who is more indebted to nature than duke Shameleſs, nor ever has been in any age a man who ſo ſcandalouſly abuſed natural advantages. His family was of the firſt in the kingdom in virtue as well as rank, and his fortune equal to every thing that virtue which had inſpired his anceſtors, required of him. It was with infinite pleaſure that his country had ſeen him ripening into manhood, with all the open generoſity, all the ſpirit of his fathers, all the boldneſs and intrepid daring that had for a ſeries of ages rendered his name illuſtrious among the moſt illuſtrious: but what was the diſappointment of the world to ſee that openneſs of temper which they had admired in the boy, and which had promiſed all that unbounded

unbounded beneficence, which in his predeceſſors had made his eſtate a bleſſing to thouſands, and render'd half a nation happy, break out in the man into all the extravagance of an abandoned profligate; and to ſee his money laviſhed on two or three minions of his vices, ſquander'd at brothels, or diſtributed among the cheats that attend a public gaming table. The ſpirit which had made his anceſtors terrible among the enemies of their country, debas'd itſelf in him into the daring to do every thing that a man ought to be aſhamed of: and that intrepidity and boldneſs, which had immortaliz'd their names among the heroes of the times, became ſcandaliz'd in his breaſt by outrage and violence, where-ever his money cou'd palliate the abuſes, or his rank and dignity protect him from the proper rewards for them.

It was with a mixture of ſcorn and indignation, that the generous and honeſt heart of Loveill look'd on this degenerate youth as he enter'd the room. The contempt of his being wholly overlook'd by him, which was one of the common inſtances of this important gentleman's pride, wherever he met with any body a ſtep below that rank he ſo eminently diſgraced, would, on another occaſion have fir'd his reſentment; but he had now matters of more

more importance to attend to. He ſaw the conflict between anger and reſpect, that glow'd in the lady's face all the time the duke was ſpeaking to her; and as ſhe purpoſely dropp'd hints, that let a man of his penetration ſufficiently into the whole hiſtory of their meeting, he now ſaw the obſtacle he was threatened with in its full light; and found that this egregious rioter kept her in a ſuſpence with regard to all the world, as to offers of marriage, tho' he would never explain himſelf ſo far as to tell her, whether he meant a ſerious courtſhip to her or not.

Loveill no ſooner diſcovered this, than he underſtood the nature of the friendly office the lady had requir'd of him; he cou'd not loſe a moment in ſo honourable a cauſe; and very politely going up to the lady, he told her he wanted to ſpeak a word or two with her before he took his leave. This anſwered exactly as he had expected; the duke out of patience at ſuch a familiarity in a man he had deſpis'd too much even to look at, put his arm between him and the lady, and with all that haughtineſs which uſually attends an unmerited eminence in rank and fortune, aſk'd him, "Who are you?"

Loveill fir'd at the diſdain he was treated with, and at the ſame time pleas'd with an occaſion

occaſion of doing all he wanted, told him, that as this was a queſtion the lady wanted no information about, he wiſh'd his grace would make it his requeſt to her to retire. The duke ſtartled at ſo cool a proceeding, toward what he very well underſtood was coming, he heſitated a little at it; and Loveill taking all the advantage of his confuſion, puſh'd his ſucceſs by ſaying, "ſince you "decline it, I muſt beg it of the lady my-"ſelf." The widow, frighted out of her wits, begg'd Loveill to be gone; but he perſiſted not only in ſtaying, but in his requeſt; and in a manner forced her out of the room.

The lady no ſooner went out at one door than Loveill lock'd the other, and bad his trembling companion ſit down. "The ſpirit that ought to fire you on this "occaſion, my lord, (ſays he) I find is in "the wrong breaſt: it is in mine.—I choſe "to underſtand your manner of barring my "way to that lady, as little leſs than a "blow; and I am ready to reſent it, as "much as you ought what I am now ſay-"ing to you. Between theſe walls there is "no difference of rank between you and I; "and I am ſorry to tell you, that your co-"wardice alone, which I ſee now ſhakes "every limb of you, protects you from re-"ceiving from me, what the world has ſo "long waited to ſee exercis'd on you."

There

There is no command over an adverſary ſo great as the taking advantage of his fears. The duke ſaw before him a reſolute fellow who dar'd do every thing, and who knew that He dar'd do nothing. His terrors at once ſober'd and ſilenc'd him, and Loveill proceeded: "Though your ſcan-"dalous meanneſs diſappoints me of my "revenge, it ſhall not ſcreen you from do-"ing juſtice to that lady. Tell me, my "lord, what is your intent in regard to "her?" He receiv'd no anſwer to this queſtion. "Is it, continued he, to marry her? "Remember that you are never to go back "from what you now declare; and I will "have your anſwer."

The noble peer now ſaw it was in vain to think of ſilence: he aſſum'd a falſe courage, and reply'd, Sir, you have us'd me ill.——I am alone.——Loveill impetuouſly anſwer'd, why ſo am I— alone!— How wou'd you be with a man you have injur'd? Claim nothing from your quality: you have ſcandaliz'd it by your behaviour; and 'tis not that but your fears that protect you at this moment.——Anſwer me; for I will be anſwer'd.

The peer continu'd, Sir, "I do not in-"tend to marry her.—I am glad of it, re-"plies Loveill haſtily: ſhe has a happy "eſcape of you: but now hear me, Sir, I

"do

" do intend to marry her; and you know
" what you have to expect, if you here-
" after dare to ſpeak to, to look at, or
" even to think of the lady who is to be
" my wife, under your declar'd intentions.
" The door is open to you;—but do you
" hear me, Sir, this ſtory will be no ſecret.
" Some other of your outrages make it very
" proper for you to be abſent too. Get into
" ſome foreign part of the world as faſt as
" you can, and live there till it is forgot
" that you ever liv'd here."

The noble lover was no ſooner gone, than the lady flew into the room, and made all the acknowledgments that became her to her deliverer. She own'd, that the duke's rank and fortune gave him a ſort of preference that a woman cou'd not well withſtand; but that had ſhe before known his heart ſo well as ſhe now did, ſhe wou'd ſooner have thought of marrying his footman than himſelf, had he been ever ſo much in earneſt about it. If his cowardice ſet him in a very contemptible light with this lady, there was another conſideration, his avowed intent of debauching not marrying her, that rows'd her pride and reſentment to a pitch that ſet him yet infinitely lower. She wou'd not ſuffer herſelf however to believe, that he had really dar'd to think of ſuch an intent, but excus'd

excus'd his baſeneſs at the expence of his courage; and perſwaded herſelf, that his fear of the reſentment of Loveill, provided he look'd on him as a rival, had terrify'd him into any acknowledgement that might place him in a light, in which he was likely to be leſs obnoxious to him for the future.

CHAP. XXI.

Loveill becomes peſter'd with a legion of rivals.—He attempts a thouſand ways to get rid of them.

BRAVERY is one of the moſt amiable virtues, in a woman's eye, that a man can be poſſeſs'd of: they at all times reverence it as a quality that may be of infinite uſe to them; but when it has been really exerted in their ſervice, what was before eſteem, becomes a ſort of romantic gratitude, which never fails to repay the hero abundantly in the ſhare he has in their hearts for ever afterwards.

From the moment of this piece of gallantry, Loveill took place in the lady's favour of all that pretended to her. She treaſur'd up the open declaration he had made to his rival, of his intent to marry her, though ſhe did not think it proper to take

take any ſort of notice of her having heard it: And this proof of perſonal courage, added to the other good qualities ſhe had before obſerv'd in him, created a paſſion in her which ſhe cou'd not be ignorant of the nature of; and which, now he had taken away the cauſe of all that reſerve with which ſhe had been us'd to hear him, ſhe did not think it worth while to take any pains to hide.

The public are fond of ſcandal, eſpecially when it affects the great. The ſtory of Loveill's triumph got air among the ſervants, and ſpread itſelf through the ſtreet, thence through the neighbourhood, and thence thro' the whole town: and as every man claims a ſort of merit in the telling a ſtory, which increaſes in proportion to the ſtrangeneſs, ſingularity, or heightening of the circumſtances, it ſoon became the news of every coffee-houſe, milliner's ſhop, and tea-table in town, that Mr. Loveill had can'd Duke Shameleſs.

People are ever ready to believe what they wiſh. The noble peer had behav'd ſo very remarkably in the world, that there was not a perſon in it, who ever had heard his name, that did not believe it true: and Loveill found himſelf poſſeſs'd of a reputation from the affair, which gave him a figure in the polite world, and which he indeed

indeed had deſerv'd, as much as if the circumſtances under which the ſtory was told had been true. He had a true reliſh for the ſucceſs of his adventure, as he knew that every breath of fame that reſulted from it, would blow up the fire he wiſh'd to raiſe to the utmoſt poſſible height in the breaſt of the charming widow.

While he was congratulating himſelf on the event of what had paſſed between him and the gallant peer, he did not recollect however another circumſtance, which he might naturally, if he had given himſelf time to think, have expected from it; and which very ſoon preſented itſelf to him in a very troubleſome, if not a very formidable ſhape.

It was not to be ſuppos'd, that a woman of Mrs. Conqueſt's fortune, beauty, and accompliſhments, cou'd be in this amorous and ſcheming town, without a train of lovers. It is true, that the arch-rival Shameleſs, at the period when Loveill became acquainted with the lady, had, like Aaron's ſerpent, as it were, ſwallowed up all the reſt. The dread of the mad fury of ſuch a rival, and the ſenſe of his ſuperior fortune and rank, had made every body conſtrue the lady's irreſolution, from her uncertainty of his intent, into a declaration in his favour and an univerſal deſpair had

ſpread

ſpread itſelf among them. It was owing to this that our hero had found her, as appear'd at firſt to him, abſolutely without lovers: but no ſooner had he demoliſhed this ſingle pretender, than he found himſelf embarraſſed with an almoſt numberleſs multitude. Every man that had paid his addreſſes before to the lady, renewed his viſits, his letters, his compliments; and every man concluding it his intereſt to keep peace with ſo terrible a fellow as Loveill appear'd to them to be, they all treated him, whether in their addreſſes behind his back, or when they met him in the lady's company, with an uncommon reſpect; and ſeem'd to acknowledge him a ſort of knight-errant, to whoſe proweſs they were indebted for all their good-fortune.

Loveill was peſter'd and perplexed with theſe buzzing triflers, as much as a lion wou'd be by the ſettling of a legion of flies upon what he had prepar'd for his breakfaſt. It was not only an endleſs but an impoſſible attempt to call them all to an account; if he had fought one a day, they would have laſted him a twelvemonth: and if he had ever ſo much a mind to have brought this about, there was not one of them that he cou'd prevail with to come within

within the moſt diſtant probability of quarrelling with him.

He preſs'd the lady to do what he found no means of effecting himſelf; he intreated her to diſmiſs them; but this prov'd as impracticable a ſcheme to ſucceed in as the former. Vanity is ſo cloſely interwoven with a ſenſe of charms in the female ſex, that no art or force is ſufficient to ſeparate them. The lady, though ſhe heartily deſpis'd every one of her rivals, yet cou'd not but be pleas'd with the adoration of ſuch a train of them; and the diminiſhing her own glory, by but retrenching one from the number, was the only thing that Loveill cou'd never argue her into. If he turn'd the advantages of his good offices to the lady, and his ſucceſs in his addreſſes againſt them, he cou'd perceive they comforted themſelves that women might change; and that it was not always the man who beſt deſerv'd a lady, who had the good fortune to carry her.

He preſſed upon her the merit of his own ſervices, which ſhe ever rated much higher than he did himſelf; and urg'd to her the ſorry compliment theſe people paid to her underſtanding, in ſuppoſing ſhe might chooſe worſe, when they acknowledged better was in her reach. But to this ſhe pleaded, as the excuſe for her par-

doning it, that it was not their cenſure on her particular ſelf, but on the ſex; and that ſhe did not take upon her to be the champion in the cauſe of all the female world.

Our hero was heartily in love with this charming creature; and it was therefore that he was heartily mortify'd by his diſappointments. There was not another woman in the world that he wou'd not have given up without reluctance, under the ſame provocation; but he now found himſelf too far engag'd, for the foibles of the woman he lov'd to ſet him free again. He had even thoughts of propoſing immediate marriage, as the ſure means to be rid of his rivals; for he ſaw he cou'd depend on the lady's honour and conduct to the niceſt point: but this appear'd, tho' a ſure remedy, yet a too deſperate one to be apply'd, unleſs the diſeaſe were more dangerous than at preſent it appear'd to be.

He found it impoſſible, upon the whole, to get rid of her lovers at any tolerable rate together; and at length he determin'd to uſe them to his own purpoſes, and againſt one another.

He knew there was but one way of getting into their ſecrets, which was by means of his lady's woman. She had opportunely juſt taken a new one, who he knew cou'd be yet retain'd in no body's ſervice;

and he fee'd her into his own. He inſtructed her in the nature of her buſineſs; and gave her the examples of many of the people of the higheſt rank in the profeſſion, to prove that lawyers never get eſtates ſo faſt, as when they are fee'd on both ſides. He enjoin'd her to take of every body that was willing to give; but ſtill, as ſhe muſt be falſe to all but one, to let his beneficence, join'd to his timely admonitions, give him the preference, and fix him as the one ſhe ſhou'd be true to.

With this excellent friend to ſecond all his ſchemes, and to give him intelligence of the poſts where moſt danger threaten'd his cauſe, he proceeded very ſucceſsfully againſt the numerous enemy. If he met with only one of them in her company, he took care to make him ſhine in ſome light that he knew wou'd render him contemptible to her; and at the ſame time wou'd make him a foil to his own pretenſions in the contrary character. If he met with two together, he certainly engag'd them in a diſpute, in which he knew neither of them cou'd get the better; and in which their utmoſt efforts cou'd only ſerve to render one another contemptible. If he found the lady naming any one of them well behind his back, he took care to join in the encomium; but to turn it on points in which

which he knew to excell wou'd be with her to be deteſted. If two of them had ſpirit enough to be troubleſome, he ſet them to quarrelling with one another: and if any man did a thing that appear'd to have ſome merit toward her in it, he took care to blind his underſtanding with his compliments, till he drew him into acknowledging ſomething as the motive of his acting, in which ſhe had no concern.

His faithful intelligencer gave him in account one day, that the gentleman who us'd to ſignify himſelf to her under the name of Thyrſis, was too much in favour. The lady found the next morning a letter on her toilet, ſigned by the ſame name, and full of expreſſions of gratitude, for the many teſtimonies of love ſhe had lately given him. The indignation the coxcomb's ſuppos'd letter rais'd in her breaſt was too violent to let her enquire into circumſtances; and the next time they met, the lover was abus'd for daring to write ſuch a letter, and diſcarded for ever, for the double crime of daring to deny it.

He was next alarmed with the renewed pretenſions of an old acquaintance, who pretended to ſomething like conditional engagements in her huſband's time. The penny-poſt immediately brings her a blank cover, encloſing a farthing preſent of a

Grub-ſtreet book, in which the only notice of the reaſon of her receiving it, is a leaf doubled down, in which there is the hiſtory of a Saxon lady, who having broke her promiſe to her lovier, was carry'd away by the devil one night in a whirlwind, with a corner of the houſe into the bargain. The inſolence of ſuch a pretenſion, and the contemptible light in which the manner of making it, ſet the underſtanding of the perſon who it was intended ſhould be ſuppos'd to have ſent this polite letter, did his buſineſs. Mrs. Conqueſt was too proud to come to an explanation with a fellow who had affronted her; and thus another formidable rival was dispos'd of.

A yet more dangerous fellow pleas'd her by his flattery, which was doubly welcome to her, as real good ſenſe, and an uncommon wit, were ſacrificed to the giving it. If this lover had any contemptible quality, it was a love of punning, contracted at the univerſity, and rooted in him as an amiable accompliſhment by the applauſe of people whoſe good word a wiſe man ought to be aſhamed of. Loveill knew the abominable light in which his miſtreſs's true taſte held this vice of wit; and he never fail'd of giving his loquacious rival a thouſand opportunities of making himſelf glorioufly ridiculous to her by it. Often had

he ſhook this moſt artful of all his enemies in the lady's eſteem; but flattery he found had always charms to reinſtate him.

Loveill found this gentleman by far the moſt formidable of all his rivals, but he determined that there was yet one certain way of carrying the lady from him; which was the adding his merit to his own. It was on this occaſion that Loveill firſt proſtituted his tongue to the ſervice of his paſſion: he ſaid a thouſand things to her that no woman could deſerve; and as he found no ſort of praiſe did his rival ſo much ſervice as that beſtowed at the expence of ſome other beauty, he determined to heighten his character with her, by ſacrificing all the fine women of the age to her, at once, and to do this in the form of what was infinitely the higheſt merit in itſelf in regard to her, the making verſes in her praiſe; and finally, when her rapture was at the higheſt for it, to take all the merit of it to himſelf.

He met the rival the next evening; he took occaſion to accuſe him of being a poet. That lover had cunning enough to know the rank ſuch a qualification would bear in the thoughts of a woman of Mrs. Conqueſt's turn, and took great care not deny it. He continued his ſcheme by bringing into converſation the names of the

moſt celebrated beauties of the time, and particularly ſuch as the lady knew, and led his rival to own their ſeveral merits, but to ſacrifice them all to her, by adding, that till ſhe appeared, no woman had charms enough to make any impreſſions on him. The artful ſycophant was led ſo far as to praiſe the underſtanding of Mrs. Conqueſt, at the expence of a very unjuſt ſatyr upon ſome of the others; in which he called them ſigns of women, lifeleſs idols, and painted dolls for boys to play with.

The ſuperior addreſs of Loveill never manifeſted itſelf ſo glorioufly as on this occaſion: he contrived to bring out of his rival's mouth every ſyllable that he had before concerted for him to ſay, in order to introduce the intended extravagant praiſe, and to father it upon him; and he did not omit to repeat every paſſage that was to be of future uſe to imprint the remembrance in the lady's memory.

It was impoſſible for Mrs. Conqueſt to conceive that Loveill could have any end to anſwer in making his rival ſhine before her, otherwiſe a woman of her diſcernment could not have miſſed the obſervation. They took their leaves together: and the next morning when the ladies came down to breakfaſt, a letter was ſerved up with

their

their chocolate, the paper, the hand, and the addreſs of which determined them both, before they opened it, to declare it was Mr. Quibble's. It was directed to Mrs. Conqueſt, who no ſooner opened it, than ſhe coloured like Venus when Paris delivered her the golden prize: ſhe read it twice, but willing to hear it too, ſhe delivered it to Miſs Severe, telling her "it is "not my buſineſs, Madam, to read my own praiſes to you." Miſs Severe read as follows:

While the neglected lillies fade
In Pits' *ambroſial frame;*
While from the radiant eyes of Wade,
Unheeded lightnings beam.

While the calm breaſt no tranſport owns
Where Lincoln *treads the plain:*
While diſregarded Chidley *frowns,*
While Nicholls *ſmiles in vain.*

Say thou ſuperior pow'r what charms
Thy happier beauties aid?
Why though no other form alarms,
Thy adoration's paid?

What is thy more than magick ſkill,
That gives in ſome new way,
The roſy miſchief power to kill,
Reſiſtleſs * Conqureſs *ſay?*

* Quere, Is there not ſomething wrong in the orthography of the latter part of the word *Conqureſs?*

In vain diſſembler would thine eyes
Their conſcious triumph hide:
In vain that bluſhing ſilence trys
To veil the noble pride.

That ſpeaking ſmile declares the whole,
Declares ſuperior charms,
Inſpir'd by a ſuperior ſoul,
No art no pow'r diſarms.

The widow was in raptures as ſhe heard the compliments; and Miſs Severe owned they were good verſes. Loveill had taken infinite pains in the counterfeiting the hand of his rival; and, in fine, nothing ſtood in the way of their being indiſputably father'd upon him, but Mrs. Conqueſt's opinion, that they were too good to be his. She even ſuſpected Loveill; and when the other lady urged the pun upon her name at the end of the fourth ſtanza, as an inconteſtable proof of their being the production of Mr. Quibble's muſe, the widow had diſcernment enough to ſee that even That might be only a maſter-ſtroke of the other's, if (as it was plainly the caſe, ſuppoſing that they were really his) he intended to father them upon Quibble.

There is hardly a man in love who does not pretend to rhiming. The gallants who

who were happy enough to make their morning-viſits that day to the widow, had all of them the verſes read over to them; and as they ſaw they came without a name, and the ladies always attempted to father them upon the perſon to whom they read them, the ſucceſs they were eaſily perceived to have with the lady, induced them ſeverally to own them.

Loveill did not make his next viſit till the evening, and Quibble eſcaped the trap that had been laid for him, as to the owning them, by being out of town for the day. Tho' this part of the ſcheme miſſed, there were however before Loveill came there, no leſs than fourteen ſeveral people, who had each acknowledged himſelf the author of them.

The ladies had been extremely entertained with this multiplicity of fathers to the foundling they were ſo fond of, when Loveill made his viſit. They were ſenſible they had now a different game to manage, and the widow was not more earneſt to prove them his, than Miſs Severe to prove that they were not, or than the lover himſelf would have been in the ſcheme of the latter, had he recollected himſelf.

He had concerted before hand the true means of concealing himſelf as the author, by determining to praiſe them extrava-

gantly: he knew he had women of diſcernment to deal with, and hoped he had not been idle enough in any part of his behaviour to make them think he could be ſo much a coxcomb as to praiſe his own works.

Accident often goes beyond the utmoſt bounds of cunning or contrivance in our favour: Loveill's good genius threw him at this lucky hour under the protection of this fortunate deity, and added by it not a little to his intended artifice. It may be judged by the manner of his ſtrolling into the company of theſe ladies, that the ſame good deity had him in her eye during the whole period of this affair: ſhe ſeconded her favours at this time, by the odd turn of making him forget all that he had to do in the critical ſcene he was entering upon. He had met the battered Clelia in his way in a gay coach, dreſſed in high taſte, and with a languiſhing lover at her ſide the maſter of the ſplendid equipage, who, as he could plainly enough read in both their faces, had irrevocably made her the miſtreſs of it.

His benevolent heart was rejoiced at the lady's good fortune, and he was full of the ſtory as he entered the room. He expatiated on the unerring providence of chance, that had contrived to raiſe the lady

in

in this manner, by means of the only man of the age, whom one could not pity for falling into the ſnare: he was relating a thouſand of the exploits he had heard of her ten or a dozen years before, when the ladies, too impatient for their own buſineſs to be entertained with any thing elſe, grew peeviſh at his perſeverance, and took twenty occaſions of breaking off the diſcourſe.

Miſs Severe abruptly told him, that they had received that morning a moſt agreeable preſent; and the widow added, that the idleſt thing the man who had made it could poſſibly be guilty of, would be the concealing himſelf, and ſuffering others to run away with the merit of it. Miſs Severe had kept her eye conſtantly on his face as ſhe ſpoke, to watch his bluſhing at the naming it, and the widow had viewed him not leſs attentively, to ſee the effect of her free declaration; but not a drop of blood altered its courſe, nor a feature of his face ſhewed the leaſt token of confuſion. They ſaw that his indifference was too open to be an affected one; but they were not aware, that its being natural, was only the effect of his forgetting the occaſion of what they ſaid to him.

The widow looked earneſtly at her friend, and acknowledged ſhe was in the right; and taking the paper out of her pocket, delivered

delivered it to Loveill, and told him, there's the preſent we ſuſpected you of making us, but I find you are unhappy enough to be innocent. I am infinitely obliged to the author; and it is plain enough now who that is.—There were but two people we could ſuſpect—and you are cleared of it.

All this was not without its concealed meaning: the lady was yet not ſo free of her ſuſpicions as ſhe pretended to be: ſhe was attempting under the appearance of being ſatisfied, to draw Loveill into the convincing her ſhe was in the wrong; and according to a plan ſettled before-hand between the ladies, Miſs Severe was watching his countenance all the while this home-attack was making.

It was not till he ſaw his own hand upon the paper, which Mrs. Conqueſt delivered to him, that he recollected what the ladies were ſo earneſt about: he kept up the ſpirit of the happy indifference and ignorance he had hitherto deceived them by, perfectly well during his looking over the verſes. He made blunders on purpoſe to countenance his not having ſeen them before; and when he had gone thro' them, prais'd them ſo heartily, that they were both convinced; and the truth of the fathering them upon Quibble ſeem'd indiſputable.

After

After a thouſand indifferent things, Loveill ſaw Miſs Severe at length recollect herſelf all on a ſudden, and give an extremely expreſſive look to the widow, whoſe pretended blindneſs to it diſcovered in the careleſly turning her head another way, ſhewed him plainly enough her underſtanding it: ſhe immediately after with great indifference told him her watch went ill, and aſked him what it was o'clock by his: Loveill ſaw her take out the caſe the verſes had come in, as ſhe ſpoke: he found he was diſcovered: and on the lady's deſiring to have the watch in her own hand, that he might not deceive her, he modeſtly told her, Madam, you have it—I will never pretend to ſcheme againſt you again.

Mrs. Conqueſt apply'd the ſeals that hung to the watch-chain ſeverally to the wax on the caſe, and found that one of them fitted it too well to leave the perſon who had ſent it, any longer a ſecret. He received the thanks of the lady very ceremoniouſly on the occaſion, but left them both in the dark as to the reaſon of his wiſhing to have it father'd upon another perſon.

The merit of theſe verſes would have ſet their author much above the level of the reſt of the lovers in this lady's train, had he wanted that pre-eminence before; but this

was

was not all he wiſh'd: his ambition was not to reign ſuperior, but alone; and out of humour with an affair that gave him ſo much trouble, and out of patience with the encouragement he found the widow would give every fool that told her ſhe was handſome, he contrived to revenge himſelf of himſelf, and of the whole train of his rivals at once, by producing an invitation from a relation in the country, which he knew the good nature of his miſtreſs would not refuſe, tho' it coſt her ſome pain; and which would keep her out of the way till either ſhe had learned more conſtancy, or himſelf more indifference.

CHAP. XXII.

A new amour comes on by accident.—Mrs. Conqueſt is no more remember'd.—A falſe attack upon lady Frown.

THE reſolution with which Loveill had gone thro' the ſcene of contriving a parting of ſo threatning a duration between himſelf and Mrs. Conqueſt, was more than he found, when ſhe was gone, he had ſpirit to keep up. The reſentment he had found occaſion for while ſhe was in town, from the provoking number of his

his rivals had kept him warm, and driven off every tender thought that would have ſtopp'd the progreſs of his ſcheme: but ſhe was no ſooner gone, than he found that he did not know before how well he loved her. He too ſenſibly perceived, that he had never been ſo much in earneſt with any of the former objects of his paſſion, and on a cool deliberation on both ſides the queſtion, he became perſuaded, that tho' ſhe might have more faults than ſome of his former miſtreſſes, ſhe had more merit than them all.

He ſoon perſuaded himſelf of the folly of the attempt to cure himſelf or her by abſence: upon the whole however, reconciling himſelf to the diſtance he had now contrived to have her placed at, from the diſadvantage he had by that means thrown upon all his rivals, he ordered horſes for a viſit to her the next morning.

The anxiety of a lover now firſt ſeized upon the heart of our hero. He forgot the way he was going, while he was terrifying himſelf at every ſtep with the phantom of ſome new rival in the country, of ſome ill impreſſion ſome fool or other might give her of himſelf: and above all things he dreaded, that ſhe ſhould have found out that he was at the bottom the real cauſe of her exile from the gay world.

Full of theſe melancholy apprehenſions, and of a thouſand tender thoughts, he was trotting along the road, when his ſervant told him that there was a coach broke down on the other ſide of the way, and the company in it in very great diſtreſs. The accident had happened the moment that the fellow ſpoke of it, but ten times the noiſe would not have waked his maſter from the reverie he was then in. He was no ſooner informed of it, than he flew to the aſſiſtance of the company. And while he employed the ſervants in cutting the harneſs of one of the horſes who had fallen in a very unlucky poſture, and was kicking the front of the coach to pieces, himſelf got the door open, and with ſome difficulty got out the ladies.

The miſtreſs of this equipage was the ſage lady Frown, who was at this time going to dine with a friend at Hampſtead, and to take the diverſion of the long room in the evening: her company were a maiden ſiſter, her blooming daughter, and a country clergyman who was to be her partner.

Loveill had taken care of all the reſt before he found that the fair daughter of the lady who had been moſt in haſte to get out, was in the coach. When the vehicle was ridded of the reſt, he ſaw her ſqueezed up by the weight of the good doctor into the

the ſhape of the corner ſhe filled, and hardly reaching out a hand to give him opportunity to ſave her.

He had no ſooner helped her out, than he fell back from the door of the coach ſtruck with amazement at her face; and if his ſervant had not been behind him, had perhaps ſuffered as much by the accident as any of the company. Mrs. Conqueſt vaniſhed from his thoughts in a moment: he gazed in ſilence upon the new wonder; and as he ſaw the doctor very charitably buſy'd in adminiſtring hartſhorn, and clapping the palms of the lady's mother's hands, he ventured to ſeize gently one of the daughter's, and in a tender accent to tell her, he hoped ſhe had not received any hurt. The lady bluſhed, and anſwered him, *no*; but that with ſuch an air of inattention, in regard to the accident, as amaz'd him: I wont reproach you, Madam, continued Loveill, (ſtill wandering over every feature of her face with enraptured eyes) with your ſeeming not to regard the danger now 'tis over, you were even indifferent to it while it laſted; and while the three, who firſt were got out, were ready to cut one another's throats who ſhould be ſaved firſt, you ſeemed in no care to be ſaved at all. How can it be, Madam, continued he, preſſing her hand

hand in a very tender manner as he ſpoke, that one born ſurely to give happineſs to the world, ſhould be ſo careleſs about continuing in it.

The lady, after a very affecting ſigh, anſwered, I have great obligations to you, Sir, and I would not under-rate your ſervices, by telling you you have in me ſaved a life not worth the preſerving. I have no place in the world, nor any buſineſs in it; but there is one now coming to herſelf that has ſo many uſes for the life you have preſerved, that ſhe will thank you much more heartily than I can, tho' ſhe cannot be more ſenſible than I am of the merit of your generous ſervice in it.

Loveill was in raptures with the lady at every ſyllable ſhe uttered. The unaffected ſorrow that hung upon her gave her graces that he had never found in any woman before; and he was charmed beyond meaſure to find the natural inconſtancy, and love of variety, that was the ruling paſſion in his compoſition, attacked by a beauty of a new kind. He had before been enamoured of the gay, the witty, the accompliſhed, in ſhort, with every thing that the world calls agreeable; but it had not entered into his thoughts that there might be charms in the very oppoſite qualities to ſome of theſe, and that there

there is a ſort of tenderneſs expreſſed in the grief of a fine woman that is more ſtriking than the utmoſt ſprightlineſs, and ſeems of all other qualities that which is moſt allied to love, and is moſt likely to influence the heart towards it.

Novelty, without one charm beſide, would perhaps at this inſtant have been of power enough to have called off our lover from a conſtancy that he found was likely to be very troubleſome to him, but with this there was, in the preſent caſe at leaſt, as much beauty as would have done all the buſineſs without it. Loveill grew more and more enamoured every moment: he adored the lady the more, as being the exact oppoſite in temper to the flighty Mrs. Conqueſt; and he bleſſed his good fortune that had thrown in his way the means of getting free from the chains of that moſt hopeleſs, and moſt troubleſome amour.

He had hardly time to tell the young lady, that her ſorrow wounded him more deeply than every thing he had before met with, when the mother coming to herſelf after a tedious ſuſpence to her friends, called out to the young lady, come hither, Suky!—Lord, child, how you poke!—I profeſs, Mr. Text, continued ſhe, addreſſing

dreſſing herſelf to the doctor, if I were inclined to ſubmit to marry again, that awkward girl would terrify any man of conſideration from venturing on a perſon, under whom the children were likely to be ſo frightfully educated—but there's no waſhing the Blackmoor white—poor Sir Simon, if you remember, doctor, always did it. He ſaid, it was in the blood of the Frowns to ſtoop. —— Lady Frown thought ſhe had now ſufficiently ſignified herſelf to Loveill as a notable woman, and turning about, took occaſion to ſee him: ſhe made a thouſand apologies for the rudeneſs of not having returned him her thanks ſooner, and now did it in ſo ſublime and ſo prolix a manner, that the coach was got in order again by that time ſhe had ended her harangue.

Loveill's diſcernment ſeldom left him in the lurch. He immediately made out that the old lady was by no means willing to be thought ſo: that ſhe intended to ſupply the place of Sir Simon, who had not been dead quite a twelvemonth, as ſoon as ſhe decently could; that ſhe looked on the tall girl he had been paying his addreſſes to, as her greateſt obſtacle, and was determined to keep her a child till ſhe ſhould be willing to acknowledge herſelf an old woman,

woman, unleſs ſhe ſhould be ſo fortunate to break her heart in the mean while.

He readily ſaw, that nothing could ſo certainly cut off all proſpect, all poſſibility of ſucceſs with the daughter, as his attempting any thing in the mother's preſence. Love, which has inſpired ten thouſand villanies, now taught our gallant, for the firſt time, to proſtitute his vows where he intended they ſhould take place, and do their utmoſt miſchief, yet where he meant nothing by them but to deceive: he flattered himſelf, that this would be but a juſt vengeance for the barbarity of the lady to her daughter, who was the proper object of thoſe addreſſes ſhe commanded to be paid to herſelf, and he determined to make his utmoſt efforts, where he ſaw much weaker might have been ſufficient for a common purpoſe.

As he could aſſume almoſt any character at pleaſure, he no ſooner determined his falſe attack upon the old lady, than he put on the deportment that was likely to prove moſt agreeable to her; and dropping in an inſtant all the gaiety of his diſpoſition, and hiding the ardour of his new paſſion under an indifference ſo well affected, that no body leſs cunning than himſelf could have diſcovered it; he ſunk into the formal gentleman of an age ago, and aſſumed the

the gravity of a philoſopher while he returned her compliment; and told her he was happy to have been, under providence, the inſtrument of ſaving (as he now very plainly perceived) one of the moſt accompliſhed ladies in the world; and that he ſhould enter the day, on which an event ſo favourable to him had happened, among thoſe that he obſerved with a peculiar gratitude to heaven, as proving to him that he was not made in vain.

It was odd that Loveill could hit upon ſo much of the lady's turn of mind from the little he had ſeen of her; but his diſcernment in reading peoples ſouls in their faces, which had ſcarce ever failed him, had now ſucceeded beyond its ordinary chance; and the ſage matron was raviſhed with delight to find ſhe had accidentally met with the only man that nature ſeemed to have cut out for her huſband.

The lover handed the ladies into their coach, and ordering the fellow to drive very ſlowly for fear of another accident, he begg'd permiſſion to attend lady Frown to the end of her journey, that he might be ready to aſſiſt her if any ſuch ſhould happen.

The ſlow motion of the coach made the journey take up more time than wou'd have pleas'd our lover upon any other occaſion;

caſion; but it gave him an opportunity of holding a converſation all the way, as well as if he had been one of the company in it. The old lady grew more and more enamour'd of her new acquaintance, as he talk'd of the diſcretion neceſſary to every woman who puts herſelf at the head of a family; of the ruin that young people are expos'd to, by the too great indulgence of their parents; and of the miſerable ſtate of that man's affairs, who takes a wife of leſs than five and thirty.

Miſs Frown had been a little nettled at his converſation for ſome time; but a glance that he took occaſion to give her, (as ſomething that he had ſaid to the old lady ſecur'd him from her obſervation, by compelling her to hide her pretended bluſhes under her fan) let her into the whole ſecret. She bore every thing after this, not only eaſily, but with an uncommon pleaſure; and the ſober couple that fill'd the coach beſide, ow'd too much reſpect to Lady Frown, to interrupt a converſation which they ſaw ſhe was pleas'd with; ſo that the remaining three miles of the journey, furniſh'd our pretended lover with little leſs than two hours of an uninterrupted courtſhip.

When the coach arrived at the door where Lady Frown was to make her viſit, the

the lover, with all the gravity of a ſtateſman, handed her out, and bowing almoſt to her knees, told her, he was happy to find ſhe had received no injury from the accident on the road. He then aſſiſted the ſober couple in getting out; and laſt of all, the dear creature for whoſe ſake he had gone through this unpleaſant ſcene of diſſimulation. It was impoſſible for him to give her any farther token of his paſſion, than by preſſing her lilly hand as he took her out. He took care to conceal this from the eyes of the old lady, which he knew would be doubly watchful on ſuch an occaſion, by complimenting her at the ſame time, in a manner that compell'd her to turn her head another way; and he found no little reward for the painful ſcene he had paſs'd through, in the young lady's returning the ſecret ſignal he gave her of his paſſion in the ſame manner, and that with a tender earneſtneſs, and an unwillingneſs to deſiſt, that told him better than the moſt eloquent words cou'd have done, that ſhe ſaw his affection for her; ſaw all the artifice he was obliged to uſe to conceal it; and wou'd, if ſhe dar'd, thank him for it.

Lady Frown recovering from the confuſion the extravagant compliments of her ſuppoſed gallant had thrown her into, made a thouſand apologies for the trouble

ſhe

ſhe had given him, and told him, that ſhe was doubly unhappy, in that ſhe was now not at home, but only on a viſit, ſo that ſhe cou'd not aſk him in. Unwilling however, to loſe him too long, ſhe told him there was a ball that night at the place; and that if he had an inclination to be there, ſhe ſhou'd take a farther opportunity of thanking him for all his civilities.

Loveill bow'd and took his leave. He had found it impoſſible through the whole journey to ſteal a glance, except on the ſingle occaſion we have mentioned, toward the young lady, who was guarded not only by the Argus eyes of the mother, but by thoſe of both her humble friends, who wou'd have been happy in giving her intelligence. The ſame reſtraint lay upon him at parting; and as he had always the addreſs to make a merit of neceſſity, he paid his compliments very formally to the doctor and the aunt, and made it a point wholly to overlook the young lady.

The converſation at dinner ran wholly upon the politeneſs, the good ſenſe, and accompliſhments of their new acquaintance; and his having paſs'd by the child, as they all affected to call her, in compliment to the mother, not only throughout the whole journey, but at parting, was

inſiſted upon as not the leaſt part of his praiſe.

Miſs Frown knew well enough how to bear an imaginary ſlight in public, while ſhe triumph'd in private on the occaſion of it. She ſaid ſhe ſaw nothing particular in the man, and wonder'd how they cou'd take ſo much notice of him; but the old lady check'd her, and told her, "Miſs, it "will be time enough for you to talk, when "you are twenty. You ſee that you are not "yet of an age for the men that have any "ſenſe to take notice of." She continued to declare to the company, who were all intimates, that ſhe ſaw the gentleman was deſperately in love with her; and that if ever ſhe marry'd again, ſhe really believed he would be the man.

The lover who was the ſubject of this good-natur'd converſation, was not behind-hand with the ladies, in making them the buſineſs of his enquiries. He knew that in a country town, every man knows his neighbours, and all their acquaintance. He put up at the neareſt inn, order'd the beſt dinner the houſe afforded, and invited his landlord to eat with him. The wine was commanded in abundance; and the good man, who knew that he ſhou'd be paid for every glaſs he drank of it, pour'd

it

it down as faſt as Loveill cou'd have wiſhed.

When he was drunk enough to tell every thing he knew, and remember nothing afterwards of the queſtions that had been aſk'd him, Loveill began to aſk him about the family who liv'd at the great houſe juſt above him. Ah! Sir, replies the landlord, your honour is a noble cuſtomer to me: and I hope your dinner has pleas'd you. No body comes once to my houſe, Sir; and I hope your honour will always remember it. Loveill promis'd him he would dine there four times a week, and bring half the town to him; and the landlord, in the fulneſs of his heart, told him in return all he knew; and that vaſtly more than he expected, or cou'd have been informed of by any other hand.

"Your honour will pardon me, (continues "he) but I know you are aſking after the "viſitors that be gone there to-day, more "nor the gentlefolks of the houſe. My lady "Frown is a fine perſonal woman, that's to "be ſure; but the young tit, for my money, "Sir, for all that.—But I aſk pardon for be-"ing ſo bold.—O! Sir, the good old gen-"tleman was my cuſtomer; and a hearty "ſoul he was, as ever tipp'd it over tongue. "Robert, ſays he to me one day (it was not "a month afore he dy'd) if ever my head's

" laid, poor Suky'll lead a dog's life with " her mother: but I ha' taken care o' her " for all that;—and ſo he has, heav'n bleſs " his poor ſoul for it!—Why do you know, " Sir, that for all my lady flaunts it away ſo " in her flounces and her fringes, and her " geer, the girl's the fortune. Sir, ſhe has " good two and twenty thouſand pound, " payable upon the day of age, or day of " marriage; and the old woman, I can " tell her that, muſt pull in her horns a " little, when the girl has it. No won- " der ſhe keeps her ſo ſtrict, and makes " a girl of her, faith. It will be another " ſtory when ſhe comes to know herſelf, " or when ſhe marries."

Loveill, who knew his landlord was too drunk to tell any thing but the truth, liſtened to every part of this eloquent harangue with the utmoſt attention. He queſtioned him over and over, as to the more material parts of it, as the ſum and circumſtances of the fortune, but found him never vary in his ſtory. When he had got every thing out of him that he wanted, he did not think it proper to be quite ſo communicative on his own part; but concluding, that the man who would tell all he knew upon one ſubject to him, would tell all he knew upon another to any body elſe that aſk'd him, he put on a very reſerved

ſerved look, and ſaid to him, "Landlord, "you are a very good-natur'd and a very "honeſt man, but you and I differ in our "opinions: I court the old lady; it is true, "I thought ſhe had the fortune: but 'tis no "matter for that; my love is not merce-"nary: I ſhall like her as well in her ſhift, "as with all the riches in the world."

The landlord, drunk as he was, knew it was his buſineſs to be of his cuſtomer's opinion, be that what it wou'd; he humbly aſk'd pardon for what he had ſaid, and praiſing the generoſity of Mr. Loveill up to the ſkies, ſaid the old lady was to be ſure one of the fineſt women in the world, of her age.

By the time this converſation was ended, the landlord found it neceſſary to retire to bed, and Loveill to dreſs for the long room. He was in tranſport at the knowledge of the young lady's fortune; and the more ſo as ſhe did not know it herſelf, and therefore wou'd give him none of that trouble that the conſciouſneſs of a ſuperior fortune, on the lady's ſide, generally entails upon the lover for a year or two before he has the honour to be diſmiſs'd. He determin'd to redouble his aſſiduity about the old lady, and full of the ſucceſs of his new project, went to the place of appointment.

The ladies were there before him; and as he had the fortune to be behind a cluſter of beaux as he got in, he had an opportunity of examining the face and perſon of the lady who had captivated his heart, much better than he had already done, before he diſcovered himſelf.

Miſs Frown was now barely ſixteen, but ſhe was tall of her age, and much the woman in her air and deportment. The ambition of the mother, to appear not too old for a ſecond marriage, and her intereſt in making the daughter appear too young for a firſt, had kept her to this time in a white frock; the talleſt, fineſt creature indiſputably, that ever was ſeen in one. Loveill, who had admiration for every thing that was ſingular, found additional charms in this habit; and wou'd have contemplated the dear object much longer, had not Beau Feather, (who ſtood immediately before him, and the immenſe circle of whoſe hat behind very happily cover'd him) at that inſtant bow'd to ſome body he had an ambition to be thought to be known to, on the other ſide of the room. Loveill, who had now determined to be doubly circumſpect in his behaviour, no ſooner ſaw himſelf diſcovered, than he was in motion towards the old lady. He pretended to be that inſtant come in; and with great gra-

vity

vity overlook'd his miſtreſs, and complimented Lady Frown upon her complexion.

There is no flattery ſo abſurd, but vanity will open a woman's ears to it. The lady had never indeed been poſſeſs'd of any other charm except a tolerable ſkin; and twenty years before might poſſibly have had ſome civil things ſaid to her about it. She concluded in a moment, that her glaſſes had all told her lies, when they repreſented her to herſelf as alter'd; and reverenced in an uncommon manner the diſcernment of the ſagacious lover, who had diſcovered the deceit to her.

The evening paſs'd in compliments of the moſt extravagant kind paid to her underſtanding: the lover deſired the lady to give the child leave to dance, that he might be more at liberty to converſe with her. The old woman grew enraptur'd. She told him, ſhe found he knew at what time of life women were rational creatures, and expatiated upon the general miſtake of the world, in bringing girls into life too early.

They ſat down to cards, and Loveill, who ſaw ſhe was mercenary enough to forget her paſſion where money was concern'd, loſt to her abundantly. He never approached the young lady till they were

going away, when among the crowd that ſtopp'd the paſſage they were to go out at, he found means to whiſper to her, "if "you ſee what I go thro' for your ſake, I "am happy."

It was impoſſible for the young lady to anſwer, for the mother was juſt before her, and her two guardians cloſe at each ſide. As he handed her to the coach, his footman, who underſtood the hundredth part of a wink from his maſter, put out the flambeau he was lighting them with; and the young lady, as his hand had at that inſtant hold of hers, rais'd it up, and preſs'd it to her panting boſom with an unſpeakable tenderneſs.

Loveill had ſcarce breath to utter his compliments at taking leave: he was invited to viſit the family in town; and expreſs'd his ſenſe of the honour Lady Frown did him, with great ceremony. He knew there was a ſcene yet to be play'd before his next viſit; and giving his footman proper inſtructions to get the lady's ſervant to the inn before he went to bed, and to join in the landlord's ſtory, he went off for London, leaving his compliments to the ladies; and his footman, under the pretence of a lameneſs in his horſe, behind him.

Lady

Lady Frown retained at this time in her ſervice a very ſober and ſagacious ſervant, whoſe name was Edward. Edward had liv'd with Sir Simon thirty years, and had made ſhift to pick up ſo much money in the family, that if the cruelty of Mrs. Deborah, who waited on the lady, had not prevented, he had a year or two before marry'd and taken an alehouſe. The ſober and ſtaid gravity of this perſon, had preſerv'd him his place in the lady's family during her widow ſtate; in which time, tho' he had ſeen ten or a dozen new ſets of ſervants about her, he ſtill was ſafe under the character of a fellow, who wou'd ſuffer no body to cheat her but himſelf.

This ſagacious perſon was in all the ſecrets of the family. He had once conceal'd a ſmall trip of the lady, and had been made a witneſs to his maſter's will: his principal buſineſs was to keep the accounts of the family, and to be a third guardian on Miſs Suky, to attend her to and from ſchool, and to wait on her at her viſits.

The footman whom Loveill had left behind him, ſoon found that this was the man of conſequence in the family; he invited him after the ladies were gone to bed, to come and drink a pot of home-

brew'd with him at the inn; and joining to their party the landlord of the houſe, who had by this time ſlept himſelf a little ſober, they ſat down to a ſerious converſation.

The diſcourſe turn'd upon the uſual points; and the landlord began by enquiring into the name, country, and fortune of his gueſt, by means of the footman. Loveill's ſervant, who had his inſtructions to mind him in all things, was very glad of this opportunity of telling the lady's footman what he wanted to ſend to the family. He anſwered, that his maſter was Squire Loveill of Cambridge, a gentleman of five thouſand pounds a year eſtate; (for this good-natur'd perſon always made it his cuſtom, in ſpeaking of his maſter's fortune, to tack the ſhort addition per annum to it) and that he was thinking to marry and ſettle in London, if he cou'd find a lady that he lik'd.

The landlord's memory was rowz'd by this declaration; he repeated all that Loveill had ſaid to him about Lady Frown, and added, Maſter Edward, you are a man of prudence, and know the affairs of the family; I'll tell you what I ſaid to'en: Sir, ſays I, if your honour wou'd have the young thing, there's the fortune for you.—And what do you think a ſaid to me?

me? Heaven bleſs his noble ſoul for it! Landlord, ſays he, I don't marry for money; I have enough myſelf: but I love the old lady; and I'd ha' her an it were in her ſmock.

The buſineſs of the evening was now over. Loveill's man had nothing to do but to chime in with the landlord's ſtory till bed-time; and his earneſtneſs in his maſter's ſervice, carry'd him to tell him the news of the evening, before he was awake the morning afterwards.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Prince de Broſs becomes Loveill's rival.——Is well receiv'd by Lady Frown.——Hiſtory of the unhappy Miſs Suky Frown.

EDWARD, who was the confidant of the family, carried in his accounts earlier than ordinary the next morning to his lady; and with them deliver'd the hiſtory of the converſation at the inn. The lady's face was as white as her cap, when Edward delivered that part of his ſtory, in which the landlord had own'd his indiſcretion in telling his gueſt the ſecrets of the family, in regard to the fortune; but ſhe

no ſooner heard the gallant anſwer that her lover had made to it, than ſhe declar'd, were there not another man in the world but courted her, ſhe wou'd refuſe princes for his ſake. Edward, ſays ſhe, you are a truſty ſervant; you have lived long in the family: uſe your endeavours to bring this about, and I'll make your fortune.

Edward was not a little pleas'd at being commiſſion'd to act in the promoting an affair, which he wiſh'd at leaſt as well to as ſhe did. He hurry'd up to London before the family, to get things in order to receive the lover in form at his firſt viſit, which he did not doubt would be that morning.

He did not judge amiſs of the ardour of Loveill's paſſion, though he was misinformed as to the object of it. The lover was there by that time they were well got in from Hampſtead: he din'd there, ſpent the evening there, and drank tea with them the next afternoon. Every body was charmed with his behaviour; and he found every viſit more and more welcome.

A week paſs'd in this familiar way, but ſtill no advances were made toward the young lady. She was guarded and watch'd more ſtrictly than ever; and Loveill found that it was in vain, according to the preſent ſcheme, that he had made an acquaintance

tance in the family. He grew out of patience with ſo tedious and painful a diſſimulation, and determin'd ſome way or other to break through it. He had gallanted the whole family one evening to Marybon, when an accident ſtruck him with the propereſt means in the world for effecting what all his deep conſideration had fail'd him in bringing about.

They were coming down the great walk, when an egregious beau, in a gay coat and an immenſe feather, ſtalk'd into the gardens, attended by four footmen in gay liveries. The ladies were impatient to know who this eminent perſon was; Loveill check'd his fondneſs of ſatire on this moſt favourable occaſion; and inſtead of telling them that he was a French barber, who had come over, under the figure of a man of faſhion, to cheat as many people as ſo wretched a ſcheme as his wou'd lay open to him, he anſwer'd them, that this was a foreigner of immenſe fortune, and no leſs in rank than a prince.

The ladies had all their eyes upon the man, after this account; and Loveill, who the moment he ſaw him determin'd to raiſe him up as a rival to himſelf with Lady Frown, continued to tell them that this was the Prince de Broſs, who had fled to England, to eſcape the tyranny of a father,

who

who had engaged him to marry a woman he did not like; and who had determined to change his condition with the woman he ſhould find of the moſt ſenſe and accompliſhments of mind, of any in this land of liberty.

The deſign took effect to his utmoſt wiſhes: the old lady grew enamoured with the perſon of the prince, the gallantry of his behaviour, and the prudence of his reſolution, even before Loveill could contrive the means of getting them together.

The eyes of lady Frown were rivetted to the prince every time he came in ſight; and the curioſity of the two other ſilent guardians of the young lady being almoſt as great as their lady's paſſion, they alſo could ſee nothing elſe while he was paſſing by, and Loveill found means to whiſper to his real miſtreſs—"Am I right in giving your mo-"ther another lover?" The young lady's eyes gave proof of her approbation, but her tongue had no opportunity to declare it. She grew charmed with the invention of her lover; but what amazed him beyond all things was, that tho' he ſaw this plainly, yet he ſaw, that the more ſhe became enamoured of him, the more melancholy ſhe grew.

He was eager to get thro' this dumb courtſhip, and come to an explanation: he puſhed

puſhed the ſucceſs of his new ſcheme for it to the utmoſt, by praiſing every limb and every feature of the prince as he paſſed them, and running out into extravagant praiſes on the gallantry and nobleneſs of his temper.

The evening paſſed without any thing more than the preparing the lady in this manner to receive the addreſſes that were intended to be made to her; and when Loveill took his leave of the family at their door, it was with great pleaſure that he ſaw the old lady, who had been perſuaded by him into a thorough belief of her having charms, growing inconſtant to him in her heart, and determining to attempt an amour with the romantick hero ſhe had juſt ſeen.

It was Loveill's buſineſs to promote her infidelity to the utmoſt: he knew nothing could ſo effectually blind her to a love-affair of her niece, as the having one of her own; and tho' he knew the natural averſion a lady has to an old lover, as ſoon as ſhe has found a new one, he truſted to his own addreſs to keep him ſtill upon a footing of familiarity in the family, at leaſt till he found means of running away with the innocent and fond creature whom his real attempt was upon.

He remembered how ſucceſsful Hampſtead had been to his amour with lady Frown, and he determined upon the ſame place as the beſt and propereſt in the world for that of the prince with the ſame lady. He gave his footman inſtructions to get acquainted with the ſervants of the Frenchman, and to tell them that a lady of immenſe fortune was fallen in love with their maſter, and would be at the long room at Hampſtead on the following Monday. The ſervants were well enough acquainted with the ſituation of their maſter's affairs, to know that this piece of news would be very agreeable to him: he ſoon heard of it; he prevailed with his taylor to truſt him with one more ſuit on the credit of it, and he prepared with uncommon induſtry for the attempt.

It had been Loveill's care in the mean time cunningly and ſecretly to keep up the lady's expectations from her intended new amour; and on the day before to tell her, as a piece of accidental news, that he heard the prince de Broſs was to be at Hampſtead the next evening. Half a dozen milliners were employed at once to furniſh out a proper choice of ornaments; and the lady invited herſelf to dine with her friend as uſual, that ſhe might dreſs there, and not

be diſcompoſed with a journey from London before ſhe made her appearance.

Lady Frown, who never omitted any thing that could forward her own intereſt, was there earlier than ordinary, for fear ſome body elſe ſhould ſtrike her new lover's eye firſt. The prince entered ſoon after her, and the fame of his exploits having not yet reached this village, the whole place was in an alarm at his equipage. People did not dare to approach his running footman with a phraſe of leſs reſpect than your honour; and it was not five minutes before the anſwers this gay gentleman had condeſcended to make to the perſons who queſtioned him about his maſter, were ſpread over the whole town; and it was in every body's mouth, that the prince de Broſs, worth two hundred thouſand pounds a year, was come there a courting to my lady Frown.

While matters went thus ſwimmingly without doors, Loveill's footman was at the elbow of the prince within, to tell him which was the lady. A plan, like that of this renowned knight-errant, could not be carried on without a conſummate ſhare of aſſurance: and he had accordingly treaſured up a ſufficient ſtore of that quality before he came among us. He was no ſooner ſet right about the object of his paſſion

paſſion than he went up to her, and with great familiarity told her, he remember'd that he had the honour once to ſee her at Marybon, and was there ſtruck to the heart with her charms. A deal of fulſome ſtuff of the ſame kind, which was the beſt addreſs he was cut out for making, paſſed before the lady could recover ſpirits enough to anſwer: ſhe told him, that ſhe was very ſenſible a perſon of his highneſs's quality, when he was pleas'd to look upon a woman ſo much his inferior, as ſhe confeſs'd herſelf to be, was not to be trifled with in the way of a common lover: that ſhe had as well as himſelf remembered the having had the pleaſure to ſee him before, and that if he would do her poor houſe the honour of a viſit, ſhe ſhould receive it with all proper ſubmiſſion and gratitude.

The prince charmed with his good fortune preſſed an appointment; and as the lady thought it her duty to leave every thing to him, he invited himſelf to dine with her the next day. The lover complimented her on the pronunciation of the French, which he told her few ladies who had not been in the country, ever arriv'd at ſuch a perfection in; and, in fine, ſaid every civil thing to her that his wit could furniſh him with, for four hours together.

The

The lady went home in raptures with her royal lover, and not a little enjoy'd the envy of the whole company of her own ſex at the prince's beſtowing all his gallantry upon her. She got to town before day-light next morning, and ſtripped the markets all about her, to furniſh an entertainment worthy the dignity of her gueſt, and the ardour of her paſſion.

Loveill had not miſſed his uſe of the opportunity the mother's attachment to her new lover gave him of entertaining the daughter. He pleaded his paſſion in perſuaſive terms to her, urged to her the injuſtice ſhe did herſelf in living with ſo tyrannical a parent; and pretending as abſolute an ignorance as her own of the real ſtate of her fortune, told her ſhe need not regard the threatenings of that lady, while he had a home, a fortune, and a heart, all open to receive her.

The poor young creature thank'd him with her tears—ſhe told him with interrupted ſighs, that he deſerved to be loved—and that ſhe loved him—but that ſhe was born to be miſerable, and that ſuch happineſs as he offered was not for her.

Loveill could by no means underſtand her, nor had he time or opportunity to come to an explanation: had not the eyes of every body been upon the prince and lady

lady Frown, the daughter muſt have been diſcovered by her confuſion; but this concealed all, and Loveill, after receiving her acknowledgments that ſhe loved him paſſionately, and ſhould do ſo for ever, thought proper to ſlip away, leſt he ſhould be ſuſpected as the occaſion of the confuſion ſhe was in, if it ſhould have been diſcovered.

All his ſubtlety was too little to penetrate into the ſecret of the young lady's behaviour; he found he loved her honeſtly and heartily, and fifty times in his way home he muttered to himſelf, this is the wife of Loveill, if ever Loveill marries. He had left the rooms before the appointment of the dinner for the prince was made; but he no ſooner received intelligence of it the next morning, than he determined to find the means of carrying off his charming prize in the midſt of the buſtle that the whole family muſt be in on ſuch an occaſion. He concerted a thouſand different ways of executing his deſign, and diſcarded them all as ſoon as he had laid them. The riſque was too great to let him venture on any thing leſs than an abſolute certainty: and this the nature of the caſe ſcarce allowed. After deliberating away too much of the time he had for it, to no purpoſe, he called in his footman.

man. "Charles, ſays he, I have a good "opinion of your fidelity, and of your un- "derſtanding. I muſt commiſſion you in "an affair of great importance: be cautious "of every ſtep you take in it. Go to lady "Frown's, find means to ſee that honeſt "ſervant Edward; tell him I confide in "him greatly, and will reward him in "proportion to the good offices he does "me—tell him I muſt ſee his young lady, "and will give him five hundred guineas "the moment he delivers her to me."

Loveill thought he had obſerved enough of this fellow to know that he was in no danger of refuſing money, be the conditions of his obtaining it what they would; and he knew his power in the family enough to reſt aſſured that he could do what he had ſent to bargain with him about. He counted the minutes while his ſervant was gone, and was gazing with eager eyes, and open arms toward the end of the ſtreet he expected his miſtreſs to come in at; when he was ſtrangely diſappointed to ſee, after a much longer delay than he had expected, his own ſervant returning alone with a ſorrowful countenance, and a letter in his hand.

His impatient curioſity would ſcarce let him wait his coming up to the door. He ſnatched the letter from him, and read as follows:

Honoured

Honoured Sir,

IN return for your kind offer I am obliged to tell you the truth, but I deſire you will keep it a ſecret: I have been married to Miſs Suſan this four months, which is all at preſent, from

Your humble ſervant to command,

EDWARD RAP.

Loveill, who had not been uſed to mind peoples chriſtian names, and knew nothing of the ſurname that was ſubſcribed to this letter, was too much confounded with his diſappointment to recollect that the author of it was the very Edward he had ſent to, (tho' the firſt line of it expreſſed as much) till his ſervant with a melancholy face informed him of it, and added, that he had told him what was in it, and aſſured him of the truth of it. Loveill readily perceived that this raſcal had taken advantage of his knowing the ſecrets of the family, to get at the whole fortune without letting the poor girl, whom he deluded out of it, know that ſhe was ever poſſeſſed of it. He was beginning to vent his rage in a thouſand ſtrange curſes, when a loud knocking at the door called

called down the ſervant, who had no ſooner opened it, than the unhappy young creature herſelf, ignorant of what Edward had done, ruſh'd in, and threw herſelf at the feet of Loveill. "O, Sir," crys ſhe, with an earneſtneſs that ſpoke all the agony of her ſoul, "behold before you "the moſt miſerable of womankind!—I "will not ſtir till you tell me you have "pardoned me for ſuffering you to im- "poſe on yourſelf, and believe me an ob- "ject worthy your love.—I love you, I "adore you, and I will do ſo for ever— "but I am ruined: I can never be that "happy virtuous partner of your fortune "that you would have me, and I will "die before I will be any other way a "ſharer of it.—You ſee, Sir, (how can I "name it to you?) a deluded, a de- "bauched proſtitute. I only aſk you to "pity the weakneſs of my youth, and "forgive me, and to conſent that we never "meet again."—She roſe haſtily at this period of her diſcourſe, and was running out of the room 'ere Loveill could ſpeak; but before ſhe reached the door ſhe turned back, and added, "My mother, "Mr. Loveill (but why ſhould I attempt "to excuſe a thing that is in its nature in- "excuſable—yet that you may not think "me abandoned in my nature, I will tell

"you)

" you) my mother's ſeverity has urged
" me to this crime—You know the life
" I am doom'd to with her—I conſent-
" ed to be relieved from this on any terms
" —The wretch whom I was obliged to
" truſt, becauſe I had no other perſon,
" ſeized my weak moments; and, as he
" has ſince confeſſed to me, to ſecure me
" from a change in my inclination, ruin'd
" me."—The unfortunate girl was burſt-
ing from the room as ſhe delivered the
laſt word, but Loveill ſtay'd her. He
had been ſilent with aſtoniſhment and hor-
ror: he could not command his temper
at the ſight of ſo much merit ruin'd by
the ill-conducted ſeverity of a parent: he
ſuffered tears to interrupt his words for
ſome moments; and then attempted to
ſpeak, but finding he could not, he delivered
her the letter he had received from Ed-
ward.

He meant no more by this than to in-
form her that he knew her ſtory before:
but he was amazed to ſee her ſtart with
rage at the ſight of it—Marry'd! cry'd
ſhe, with a mixture of reſentment and diſ-
dain that is not to be expreſſed, no, vil-
lain! it is not come to that neither: Sir,
continued ſhe, this is a blacker devil than
I imagined: but tell me truly I entreat
you, is there any law by which he can
claim

claim me for his wife, becauſe he has undone me?

Loveill's indignation now gave him the ſpirits his grief before had robb'd him of. He ſaw the bottom of the plot, and perceived that the raſcal, who pretended a marriage with the ruin'd creature, only did it to prevent his ſucceeding with her: he queſtioned her to the utmoſt, and found that there had been nothing like a marriage between them; but that the ſubtle villain had always entreated it, and always been refuſed with contempt, even though the lady was now, by her own accounts, ſome months gone with child by him.

He did not know whether more to compaſſionate the deſtruction of ſo many noble qualifications as he now diſcovered in this unhappy girl, or to admire the generous ingenuity with which ſhe had, uncompelled, unaſked, confeſſed it to him. He told her, that tho' he could not marry her after what ſhe had told him of, he ſhould reverence and compaſſionate her memory for ever; and that tho' to his unſpeakable miſery he was compelled to ceaſe to be the lover, he would for ever be the friend to her abuſed merit. He told her the true ſtate of her fortune; and added, "Go home "with me, Madam, to your mother, and

"I will find the means of puniſhing the "wretch, who has undone you, as he de- "ſerves, and of ſettling your own affairs on "the beſt footing they are capable of."

The lady gave herſelf wholly up to his diſpoſal, and they went without loſing a moment to her mother's. They found the family in the height of joy and ſplendor, the prince at dinner with his numerous retinue about him, and the lady ſo elated with the proſpect of becoming a princeſs, that ſhe had never miſſed her daughter.

Edward, who had been in a dreadful conſternation on the miſſing his young lady, and tho' he ſuſpected where ſhe was gone, had not dared to follow her, no ſooner ſaw Loveill and her come in together than he fled the houſe, and never more was heard of. Lady Frown awakened from her dream of ſplendor by ſeeing them enter together, took it for granted that they were marry'd, and conſequently that ſhe was ruined. Loveill ſaw her fears, and addreſſing himſelf to her, bad her compoſe herſelf; for that he was not marry'd. The lady came to herſelf a little on hearing this, and Loveill continued—"You muſt not "break your heart, Madam, at the loſs of "your prince; he is a common cheat, a "beggar, and an impoſtor, employ'd by me

"on this particular occaſion to amuſe you "while I had other affairs to manage: diſ-"card him, and I'll talk farther with you."

The widow was going to reſent this indignity offered to her lover; but he got up from table, and ſuſpecting from the accent of Loveill, and from his imperfect knowledge of the Engliſh, ſomething worſe than was really the caſe, gave her a very convincing proof that the accuſation was juſt, by getting out of the houſe with ſomewhat more haſte than ceremony.

As ſoon as he was gone, Loveill acquainted lady Frown that he knew the whole ſtate of the family-fortune, and pretended private reaſons for what he did, he told her, that unleſs ſhe would give the young lady a certainty of three hundred pounds a year till ſhe came of age, he would marry her immediately, and demand the whole: The lady could not eaſily be perſuaded that he was in earneſt about giving up his pretenſions for this ſum, and that not paid to himſelf neither; but ſhe was no ſooner ſatisfy'd of it than ſhe agreed to it; and when it was ſecured in form, Loveill declared the whole circumſtances of the ſtory, called for the raſcal who had ruined the lady to be brought to juſtice, but in vain; and after earneſtly conjuring

both the mother and daughter not to ſpare him, if he ſhould ever be found, he took his eternal leave of the family.

CHAP. XXIV.

Loveill determines upon retiring into the country—He meets an old acquaintance in the drawing-room.—He marries.

LOVEILL returned to his lodgings full of reſentment and of compaſſion for the caſe before him, and full of diſappointment and uneaſineſs on the ſubject of his own affairs. He ſat down in a melancholy way, and was ready to complain that all good fortune had forſook him. He recollected that the year which he had allowed himſelf for the finding a wife was now very nearly expired, and that he was not a ſtep nearer the finiſhing his buſineſs than he was the moment he ſet about it; and that his fortune in the mean time was impaired vaſtly beyond what he had intended in the purſuit.

He ſpent ſome days in ſettling the true ſtate of his affairs; and when he had found that, tho' injured, they were not yet deſperate, he determined to retire from a place that had been the ſcene of ſo much expence

expence and diſappointment to him, and to ſit down ſomewhere in the country, and aim not at a ſplendid but an eaſy life.

He was taking his farewel of the diverſions of London, when the approach of a birthday had employed all the taylors and mantua-makers in town: he reſolved not to miſs ſo polite an aſſembly, but he determined too to make that his laſt publick appearance, and to pack up his baggage immediately after, for the next coach that ſet out toward the place he had intended to ſettle in.

He omitted the morning's court, and only went at night to the ball-room. The appearance of half the beauties of an age aſſembled together, and ſet off with all the ornaments of dreſs and gaiety, could not affect his thoroughly mortify'd heart. He looked upon womankind as a tempting miſchief, and would not believe that happineſs was compatible with them.

The room was crouded, and the night not a cool one: it was our hero's fortune to ſtand immediately before the bench on which ſat the agreeable Mrs. Grace, and her more than very agreeable daughter. If the continued ill luck that had attended him in ſo long a ſeries of amours, as have made up the body of theſe memoirs, had not placed him beyond the hopes of good

from any other courtſhip, he had certainly been taken a priſoner there. Tho' his heart had no room for love; compaſſion it abounded with: he ſaw the ladies juſt mentioned crouded and preſſed on every part for the whole night, and had all along very ſtrenuouſly kept off the people on the ſide where he was. It was with great difficulty that the young lady was kept from fainting, and it was utterly impoſſible for her to be got out. Loveill comforted her from time to time with the proſpect of the ball's concluding; and no ſooner ſaw the ſide-board opened, than after leaving them a moment, he returned with the only proper thing at that time for them, a bottle of champaign.

The ladies had ſaid ſome civil things of him while he was gone, and were not a little rejoiced to ſee him return and pour out a bumper of that precious cordial to them. He had not reach'd it to the hand of the mother, when he diſcovered on the ſeat next behind her, the lady mentioned in the former part of this work under the name of Mrs. Meanwell. His eye was no ſooner turn'd upon that well-known and once-adored face, than the glaſs and bottle fell to the ground. The lady firſt ſaw him in the midſt of this aſtoniſhment; for partly from the variety of objects to

gaze

gaze at in the place, and partly from his back being toward her, ſhe had not diſtinguiſhed him before. The ſurprize ſtruck her ſpeechleſs: ſhe ſunk into a ſwoon. Loveill, (who always had a preſence of mind that brought him out of ſcrapes) pretended that his confuſion was only owing to his ſeeing the lady faint away, and this being no wonderful accident in ſo crouded a room, what had like to have proved a very publick affair, wholly dropp'd into oblivion: the lady was pity'd, and the lover ſuppoſed a ſtranger to her.

It was with ſome difficulty that Loveill conducted her out, and put her into her chair. "Tell me, deareſt Sally, ſaid he, as "he led her out, where I may follow you." —The lady unwilling to part with him, yet dreading the conſequence of a meeting, hung upon his arm while ſhe anſwered— "O! Loveill, not to-night—to-morrow "you'll find me at Mrs. * * * 's—but you "wont come." Loveill told her with great earneſtneſs, that if he were alive he ſhould not be any where but there; and getting into a chair, went home.

It now was two years ſince our lover had ſeen this lady; ſhe had been next to the perſon on whoſe account he had ſacrific'd every thing, and his affair with whom happened at ſo early a period of

his life, that it ſcarce could deſerve the name of an amour, his firſt love. And tho' reſentment of injuries had always been a paſſion in his heart ſuperior to that even of love itſelf, and had always over-borne that weaker flame where-ever they had met in oppoſition, which had happen'd in this lady's caſe, as well as in the reſt, yet he had not been without a tincture of this rooted paſſion in all his ſubſequent amours. If he loved a lady for her wit, it was becauſe it reminded him of that of Mrs. Meanwell; if for her face, it was becauſe he ſaw ſomething in it that he fancy'd reſembled Mrs. Meanwell's; and if he eaſily broke off an amour that he had been at infinite pains to engage in, it was, becauſe after the loſs of Mrs. Meanwell, every thing elſe was indifferent to him.

Their acquaintance had begun by perfect accident, and had been continued for the ſake of the improvement they mutually received from it: they firſt met at that ſcene of delight commemorated in the beginning of this hiſtory, where we have had occaſion to ſpeak of the ſummer's retirement of the greateſt patron of learning and merit of the preſent age.

Loveill was at that time juſt come from his ſtudies, full of the knowledge of books; and the lady from a tour of Europe, which

tho'

tho' a girl, ſhe had made with an indulgent and judicious parent, full of the knowledge of the world. There was not any thing that Loveill could wiſh to enquire after, that ſhe had not ready in her memory to inform him of, nor any thing ſhe could wiſh to underſtand more perfectly, that he was not as ready to explain to her.

They commenc'd a moſt intimate and happy acquaintance, which the lady would ſuffer to be called by no warmer a name than friendſhip; but which Loveill's impetuous temper would have to be nothing leſs than love.

He had at firſt attributed the lady's backwardneſs to acknowledge it under this name, to a woman's modeſty; and he had try'd heartily at different times to banter and to reaſon her out of it; but both in vain. He had at length grown impatient of the diſtinction, had profeſs'd an immutable and eternal love for her, and preſs'd her to ſay poſitively if ſhe did or did not intend to return it. She had always accompany'd her refuſal with ſighs and an unaffected concern: ſhe now was more than ordinarily ſerious, and anſwered, that ſhe muſt not, ought not, could not; or if ſhe did, that it could be only

only a ſource of wretchedneſs to them both.

This had been the tenour of their diſcourſe for ſome days, when the uneaſy Loveill had one evening ſlipp'd away from the company after ſupper to indulge his melancholy, and be undiſturb'd in his conjectures at the occaſion of it under the covert of a double row of pines near the centre of the garden. His ſighs were all the diſturbance he made in the calm air of one of the fineſt evenings the world ever knew; and theſe were not loud enough to diſturb a pair of a lovers whom he ſaw arm in arm under a ſhady beech, at ſome diſtance before him.

His envy at ſeeing a lover happier than himſelf, led him to advance ſtill nearer under the covert of the adjoining hedge-row, to ſee who it was: he found it a face wholly unknown to him, and was returning to lament his own harſher fortune, when the lady turning her head that way, who ſhould his aſtoniſhed eyes diſcover but his inexorable Sally.

His firſt emotions would have led him to tear his rival to pieces; but cooler thought repreſs'd that violence: he recollected, that not the man but the woman was the proper object of his reſentment, and he determined to throw the whole weight

weight of it upon her. He returned ſoftly the ſame way that he had advanced; and telling the company, whom he had left in the houſe, that he would lead them to the prettieſt love-ſcene they had ever beheld, he conducted them to the place where the lovers were.

Amours had been one of the few things forbid by the laws of the houſe at theſe happy aſſemblies; every body therefore determined to find out the guilty perſons, and forming a circle that ſurrounded the place where they were, they clos'd in upon them before they had ſuſpected any body to be near them. The lover burſt his way thro' a hedge, and eſcaped unknown, and the lady was left to anſwer for the whole. No body accuſed her of more than an innocent ſcene of courtſhip; and if ſhe would have diſclos'd the ſecret of the perſon who had eſcaped, every thing had been overlooked. The company declared, that there was no crime in a young lady's having a lover; and they all thought too well of her underſtanding, to ſuſpect her's was any body ſhe needed to be aſham'd of. Her father with an uncommon indulgence declared himſelf not uneaſy about it; and went ſo far as to ſay, that if he was a man of family and merit, the want of a fortune, which he ſuppoſed was the

reaſon

reaſon of his making his addreſſes unknown to him, ſhould not make him refuſe his conſent, if his daughter thought proper to aſk it.

The company had here a new occaſion of admiring one of the beſt and worthieſt men in the world; and every body ſuppoſed the young lady would take a properer opportunity of ſpeaking with him about it: only Loveill remain'd diſſatiſfy'd: he took an opportunity of whiſpering to the lady, "I ſuppoſe you know to "whom you owe this unwelcome diſco-"very; I brought the company to make "it. I could have borne every thing from "you but this diſingenuous ſecrecy; but "I deſpiſe you now, as much as an hour "ago I loved you."

The lady made no anſwer to this ſevere reproach, nor ever had ſpoke to Loveill after it, till their meeting at this time in the drawing-room. He had left the ſcene of his misfortunes the next morning, and had never after ſo much as mentioned the name of the lady who occaſioned them, and whom he was very angry with himſelf that he could not forget, from that time.

There is no love ſo violent as an old flame renewed. Loveill could not ſleep for eagerneſs to ſee his once-adored Sally again, and now, for the firſt time, found

that

that love was too powerful even for his reſentment. He viſited her early; he would have expreſſed all the tenderneſs his heart overflowed with the moment that he met her, but ſhe declined it: ſhe made him ſit down, and with a full heart, and ſwimming eyes, ſaid to him, "O Loveill! the "diſtraction I have ſuffered ſince I ſaw "you, may you never know! I read it "in your looks, that now your reſentment "is over. I ſee you love me, guilty as "you eſteem me: but let me not receive "your tenderneſs till I have proved that "I deſerve it: let me add to the tranſport "of the vows I ſee you would pay to the "falſe and ungrateful Mrs. Meanwell, by "firſt convincing you that they are to be "paid to the unhappy, but the innocent.

"Had your violent temper given you "leave to hear me, I would at firſt have "informed you of what I have now to tell "you. I was at that time marry'd. You "ſaw with me a huſband whom I dared "not own, till by your contrivance I could "no longer conceal him with ſafety to my "character: you had my heart too late, "another had my hand before I ſaw you: "I have now been long a widow."—She would have gone on, but the ſtory was too intereſting for Loveill to be a quiet auditor to any more of it: he threw himſelf at her feet,

feet, confeſs'd the folly of his revengeful temper, but bleſs'd the fortune that had till this time preſerved it to him, as it had ſaved him from a multitude of engagements, to leave him free for the only one that could make him truly, completely, and unalterably happy.

There needed little courtſhip between lovers ſo well agreed as theſe were. The widow's year of mourning was juſt expired; and Loveill was too earneſt to be refuſed, or put off but a day. He led her to church the next morning, and put a final period to his gallantries.

FINIS.

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